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MARTIAL AND THE ENGLISH EPIGRAM FROM SIR THOMAS WYATT TO BEN JONSON

BY

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PREFACE

The present study was originally undertaken in 1916 in candidacy for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Princeton University. The writer is glad to acknowledge his many obligations to Professors C. G. Osgood and M. W. Croll of that institution. To Professor Osgood he is indebted, not only for careful reading and criticism of this work, but also for the interest in the influence of the classics which led to its inception. To Professor Croll he owes much for constant advice and assistance during the preparation of the essay, and even more for the unfailing aid of a broad and liberal scholarship.

Berkeley, California, April 7, 1924.

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people in that age of stress and flux; for the epigram, because it is trivial and ephemeral, always gives an intimate and faithful picture of its environment.

To write such a history at present would be almost impossible. No literary form has been more prolific, none more complex in its development. The bulk of epigrammatic literature is therefore vast; yet an even more serious obstacle to the student is the all but total neglect which the epigram has suffered in literary history. The whole field presents to the explorer an untracked jungle.

Obviously, therefore, it is advisable and indeed necessary that we should confine ourselves to a single, clearly marked-off portion of the subject; we have chosen to restrict our attention to the relation between the English epigram of the Renaissance and the work of Martial. In order, however, to form a correct estimate of Martial's influence and of its significance, we must be in a position to distinguish his from other influences; and to carry out this purpose we need a conception both of the nature of the epigram in general and of Martial's distinguishing peculiarities in particular. We shall often have occasion to refer to other types than that of which Martial was the master; indeed, one of our chief duties will be to account for the fact that during certain periods Martial exerted no influence. If we hope to discover what was preferred to Martial and why it was preferred, as well as why Martial at length came to be recognized as the best model for the would-be epigrammatist, we must first make a larger survey of the field.

1. The Epigram in General

The very word *epigram* is unfortunately not free from ambiguity. At the present time, it is most often used to indicate a *bon mot,* a pointed saying which pleases by some ingenious turn of thought or expression, as when we speak of the epigrams in Oscar Wilde's plays. This usage, however, in spite of its popularity, is of very recent origin, having established itself only within the last century; in this study it will be strictly avoided. I shall use the word exclusively to mean a kind of poem.

Even with this limitation the meaning of *epigram* is still insufficiently definite. The source of this obscurity is to be found in the early history of the *genre.* The word *epigramma* in Greek and Latin had a wide signification. In Greek, as the etymology indicates, it betokened at first simply an inscription. The first epigrams were epitaphs and dedications, and from the practice of inscribing a couplet or two on monuments and votive offerings the literary form arose. Subsequently, the *epigramma* became so varied in both form and substance that to define it at all is difficult. In the introduction to his selection from the Anthology, Mr. Mackail defines the word in its Greek sense as follows: "A very short poem summing up as though in a memorial inscription what it is desired to make permanently memorable in a single action or situation. It must have the compression and conciseness of a real inscription, and in proportion to the smallness of its bulk must be highly finished, evenly balanced, simple and lucid."[1] In Greek, then—and the same is true of Latin—an epigram is any poem possessing the inscriptional qualities enumerated by Mr. Mackail. When I wish, however, to indicate a short poem of this sort, I shall call it an "epigram in the Greek sense," and reserve the simple word *epigram* for its standard English meaning, a meaning considerably narrower than that of the classic *epigramma.* In English,

[1] Mackail, *Sel. Epig. Greek Anthol.,* p. 4.

according to the *New English Dictionary,* an epigram is "a short poem ending in a witty or ingenious turn of thought, to which the rest of the composition is intended to lead up."[2] Such has been the meaning of the word in English since it first appeared in 1538; and to this meaning I shall strictly confine myself throughout the following pages.

For our purposes, then, the meaning of the English word can be established without great difficulty. When, however, we turn from defining the word and attempt to describe the thing, we find ourselves in fresh difficulties. I have already spoken of the neglect that the history of the epigram has encountered. The theory of the epigram has met with no less neglect, at least in modern times. In the sixteenth century, to be sure, and still more in the seventeenth, numerous treatises were composed dealing at large with the nature of the epigram.[3] These, however, afford us slight assistance, chiefly for two reasons: the authors are more concerned with giving advice as to how to compose good epigrams than with describing the actual practice of epigrammatists; and they confine their view largely to one species of epigram, namely, the satiric epigram as practiced by Martial. This limitation is unfortunate; for the essence of the epigram is to be found not in its spirit or subject-matter but in its form.

The form or structure of the epigram is necessarily conditioned by its purpose: to lead up to a "point of wit" at the close. Consequently almost all epigrams fall into two parts, the preliminary exposition and the conclusion. The former must not only give the occasion of the epigram and convey the necessary information, but must also set the tone, so that the point

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[2] On this whole matter, see *N. E. D.* under epigram, epigrammatic, etc.

[3] For example: Scaliger, J. C., *Poetices libri VII,* 1561. See Lib. III, cap. cxxvi.

Correa, Thomas, *De toto eo poematis genere quod epigramma vulgo dicitur,* Venice, 1569.

Mercier, Nicholas, *De conscribendo epigrammate,* Paris, 1653.

Vavasseur, François, *De epigrammate liber,* Paris, 1669.

Correa's treatise is a mere expansion of Scaliger's discussion; neither is at all helpful to the student of the epigram. Mercier's work is the most useful.

shall not fail of its effect. The briefer the exposition, within limits, the more effective the epigram; so terseness is the quality most sought after. So likewise with the conclusion: it should come with the maximum of surprise, and as nearly as possible in an instantaneous flash. Brevity is indeed the very soul of the epigram. It must gain its effect in the fewest possible lines; it must be condensed, stripped of all superfluities, free from verbosity. Yet, with all its compression, it must not be labored; the very smallness which demands concision demands also lightness, ease, dexterity, in the handling.

There are certain devices which may be utilized to secure the qualities desirable in an epigram. A colloquial ease, for example, may be given to the introduction by beginning with a direct address, a question, or a quoted bit of conversation. Implication, hint, and innuendo may be used to good effect. The ways of making a point, and the means of sharpening it, are innumerable: puns, paradoxes, antitheses, balance and repetition, the juxtaposition of incongruities, the unusual application of a proverb, may be mentioned as a few of the more obvious. Since, however, Martial was a thorough master of all these devices, we may defer extended consideration of them until we come to discuss his work.

In subject-matter and in the treatment of it, the epigram is as varied as human interests and emotions. There could be no greater mistake than to suppose, as has not infrequently been done, that the epigram is necessarily satirical. On the contrary, no theme is too exalted and no feeling too profound for the epigram. Crashaw, for instance, as is well known, found in the epigram a congenial medium for the expression of the most intense religious emotion. Love of country and love of woman have prompted many epigrams. The epitaph is one of the largest classes; another is the philosophical, reflective, or aphoristic epigram. Many epigrammatists have found in their medium sufficient room for delicate play of fancy; many of these follow the Anacreontic tradition in dealing with classical myth-

ology, while others in similar vein treat objects of art or nature. Often the epigram is written to convey compliment or eulogy and to perform the various offices of friendship. Even the humorous epigram is by no means always satiric; frequently it is content merely to embody a humorous anecdote, to tell a funny story. Among the satiric epigrams themselves, the range is wide: many of them have a serious purpose, sometimes moral, as in the rebuking of drunkenness, sloth, and other vices, sometimes polemic, as when the Protestant reformers used the epigram as a weapon of propaganda.

It is important at the outset to realize the immense variety which obtains in epigrammatic literature. And yet of course the greater number of epigrams belong to the class of social satire. More often than not, the epigram has been something of a literary toy, a delight to the amateur and the virtuoso, to the craftsman with more skill than thought or feeling. Naturally, therefore, it has thrived best in the atmosphere of metropolitan literary circles, in Alexandria, in imperial Rome, in France under the Bourbons, in the England of the eighteenth century. It flourishes in urban air and in coteries. In such an atmosphere it is likely to find the masters of its art, and sure to find congenial material—the foibles, elegancies, vices, humors, and fashions of a complex and sophisticated society. There too it has an audience ready to overlook its limitations and to appreciate its virtues.

Furthermore, no doubt the very nature of the epigram—its essential brevity and wit—makes it peculiarly fitted to social satire. A man may be, of course, either religious or in love without ceasing to be clever; he may be clever without becoming shallow; he may be witty without being so at the expense of another; yet the history of the epigram would indicate that these possibilities are seldom realized. For one thing, the concision and the cleverness which the epigram demands necessitate a high degree of literary finish; and polish and wit would seem to consort less often with exaltation of feeling than with a keen

eye for the weaknesses of one's acquaintance. The reason for the vogue of the satiric epigram is to be sought not so much in the nature of the epigram as in the nature of man.

2. Martial

No author was ever more completely the product of his environment than Martial. Both in the material which he treats and in his attitude toward it, he is representative of Rome in the latter half of the first century after Christ. The same statement holds true of the form in which he casts his epigrams; it is the natural result of the rhetorical training of the time.

In the first place, his subject-matter is limited only by Rome as Martial knew the city, under Nero and Domitian. He has left us a remarkably detailed picture of his surroundings. He occupied a most advantageous position from which to view the life of the imperial capital. He himself was evidently poor and lived in bohemian fashion on his doles as client and the gifts he could obtain with his verses. However lacking in dignity and manliness this manner of life may have been, it at least brought him into contact with all sorts and classes of people. As a client and as a distinguished poet, he had the acquaintance of the aristocracy and the literary cliques; whereas his hand-to-mouth way of living made him see much of the poorer class and especially of those who like himself were dependent upon the caprices of the rich.[4]

The vivid picture he gives us shows Roman life as brilliant on one side as it is squalid on the other. His laudatory epigrams, addressed for the most part to the Emperor Domitian and to members of the imperial court, show to what lengths flattery can can go without discomposing its object, and how the resources of the most highly developed literary art may lend themselves to heightening the effect of fulsomeness. The flattery which

[4] For Martial's life, see Friedlaender's ed., I, 3 ff. See H. E. Butler, *Post-Augustan Poetry,* for a general characterization of Martial and his work.

Martial addresses to the favorite slaves and freedmen of those in power sheds some light on the state of society in which could flourish the cliques and intrigues that centered about the emperor. On the other hand, when he addresses his friends and acquaintances, most of whom seem to have been more prosperous than himself, we see the best side of contemporary life; for his friends were men of culture with philosophic and literary interests, many of them authors in their own right, connoisseurs of art, and the like. When to one of these friends Martial sends an invitation to dinner, or congratulations on marriage, or a gift accompanied by an epigram, we see him at his most likable; for he is at his best in dealing with the theme of friendship, which seems to have been the deepest and most sincere emotion he experienced.

The second class of his epigrams—the gnomic or reflective—are usually addressed to these friends. His moralizings aspire to no elevation; he professes an epicureanism even less exalted and less attractive than Horace's. *Carpe diem*—eat, drink, and be merry—is the burden of his advice: to have as good a time as possible, without worrying about anything more remote than the pleasure offered by the present moment. His real point of view is mildly cynical, strictly speaking, rather than epicurean, though neither harsh nor bitter. He sums the matter up in the well-known *Vitam quae faciunt beatiorem*,[5] in which he wishes for a modest income, health, peace and quiet, and a farm. He seldom presents himself so pleasingly.

The taste for country life indicated in the epigram just mentioned is one of Martial's outstanding characteristics. Many of his epigrams are concerned with rural Italy—with the life on the country estate of the rich city man, that is, rather than with the life of the real farmer or the peasant. Martial has all the enthusiasm for the country usually shown by dwellers in large cities, not the less sincere because called forth by the glamor of distance and contrast. These epigrams usually take

[5] X 47. References throughout are to W. M. Lindsay's edition in Oxford *Classical Texts*.

the form of epistles to his friends, and are closely allied to those of the preceding type, the reflective. Martial is entirely free from the pastoral convention. In his writing we see the real Italian countryside, not an ideal land of shepherds and their loves.

Martial wrote a number of epitaphs. A few of these are satirical, but for the most part they display to perfection that vein of sentiment and pathos, often half-playful, in which he excelled. Many of the best are on children, chiefly young slaves, or on animal pets. Others are composed for the benefit of his friends. Closely akin to these, but more conventional and of less merit, are his mere *jeux d'esprit,* concerning his friends' pets, or dealing cleverly with objects of art or natural curiosities, such as the bee enclosed in amber.[6]

Friendship, pathos, sentiment, mark the height to which Martial rises in poetic feeling; when dealing with love he is at his worst. To be sure, most of the epigrams which relate to that theme have to do with other people's love affairs and treat them satirically. But those in which he talks of his own amatory concerns are devoid of passion, with the possible exception of a few addressed to favorite slaves. It would scarcely be going too far to say that love, as an inspiration to poetry, is absent from Martial's work.

Finally we arrive at his epigrams which depict more specifically the city life of ancient Rome. Most of these, but by no means all, are satiric. Favorite themes with Martial are the spectacles in the arena, food and drink, and presents. He asks for gifts, he—less often—returns thanks for them, he writes verses to accompany those he gives his friends. He sends verses as an excuse for not calling in person on his patrons. Many of his epigrams are no more than detailed descriptions of dinners, which often include invitations to his friends to dine with him. In describing the spectacles, he finds occasion to flatter the emperor who provided them.

[6] IV 32.

Generally, however, he sees in the life about him occasion for amusement, for contempt, once in a while for disgust. The vast majority of his epigrams are satiric. Especially he attacks all the forms of hypocrisy and pretence to which such a society as he knew gives birth. The poor who pretend to wealth, the lowborn who pretend to high station, the old men and women who pretend to youth, the dissolute who pretend to rugged virtue—all provide him with material for his jests. The literary life in which he took part also furnishes him with a fertile field, and he attacks poetasters, bad reciters, and plagiarists. But in truth the objects of his satire are as varied as the life of the metropolis. Sycophants, dinner-seekers, newsmongers, social upstarts, gourmands, sots, dandies, misers, bad lawyers and doctors, courtesans, legacy-hunters—he lampoons them all. In terms of unrivaled obscenity he describes the debauchery and vice of the time. We see the streets of the capital with their contrasts, their extreme luxury and extreme poverty, their dirt and noise; we go to the baths; we wait for hours in the great man's antechamber to be presented with the price of a dinner. All this is depicted without moral indignation; Martial fell in with the spirit of the age, and it is to this fact that we owe the extraordinary vividness of the picture he has drawn of Rome in the days of Domitian.

There has been a tendency to underestimate the variety in Martial's work. It has become common to refer to the satiric pointed epigram as the "Roman" or the "Martial" type. For this reason the wide range and the varied treatment both of material and of form in the *Epigrammata* need to be emphasized. And yet there is of course some excuse for the over-insistence on Martial's satire. Certainly as a class his satiric verses are more amusing and have therefore won more popularity than his others. The point I make is only that this portion of his work must not be allowed to obscure the rest, that we must not forget his epitaphs, his praises of country life, his reflective verse, his eulogies.

In form, likewise, Martial exhibits a considerable variety. His epigrams range in length from a single verse to fifty lines and more. Many of them an English reader would not call epigrams at all. They might with equal propriety be termed epistles, epodes, short satires. Some of them differ only in meter from certain odes of Horace. A few fail to terminate in a 'point.' Yet the author apparently regarded them all as epigrams, although even in his own time there seem to have been demurrers on this point.[7] I emphasize Martial's variety because much has been said of the restricting influence which he has exerted upon the modern epigram.

That this restriction has been associated with his influence will not be denied. The reason lies in the fact that with him the pointed epigram is the rule, the unpointed the exception. In giving an account of the form of his epigrams, we shall therefore confine ourselves to this, the representative and preponderating type.

In the form of Martial's epigrams, the first thing to note is the structure. On the basis of structure, most of his work may be divided into two groups: those epigrams which consist merely of exposition and conclusion; and those which contain also a transition from the one to the other.

In the first group, exposition and conclusion usually take one of the three following forms: statement and comment; statement and question; question and answer. The simplest type of epigram is that in which the exposition consists of a mere statement in the third person, the conclusion containing the poet's comment. An illustration is III 21:

> Proscriptum famulus servavit fronte notatus.
> Non fuit haec domini vita, sed invidia.

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[7] VI 65:

> 'Hexametris epigramma facis' scio dicere Tuccam.
> Tucca, solet fieri, denique, Tucca, licet.
> 'Sed tamen hoc longum est.' Solet hoc quoque, Tucca, licetque:
> si breviora probas, disticha sola legas.
> conveniat nobis ut fas epigrammata longa
> sit transire tibi, scribere, Tucca, mihi.

See also II 77, III 83.

This type, however, is rare in Martial; more frequently the statement is in the second person, or is an indirect quotation:

> Bellus homo et magnus vis idem, Cotta, videri:
> sed qui bellus homo est, Cotta, pusillus homo est. (I 9)

> Dicis formonsam, dicis te, Bassa, puellam.
> istud quae non est dicere, Bassa, solet. (V 45)

Instead of comment, the conclusion may take the form of a question:

> Iurat capillos esse, quos emit, suos
> Fabulla: numquid [ergo], Paule, peierat? (VI 12)

Or the exposition, instead of statement, may take the form of question, the conclusion containing the answer, or some comment, perhaps in the form of another question:

> Quid mihi reddat ager quaeris, Line, Nomentanus?
> Hoc mihi reddit ager: te Line, non video. (II 38)

> Abscisa servom quid figis, Pontice, lingua?
> nescis tu populum, quod tacet ille, loqui? (II 82)

The preceding illustrate the simplest type of epigram; much more numerous are those which contain also a third element, a transition from the exposition to the conclusion. In III 15, for instance:

> Plus credit nemo tota quam Cordus in urbe.
> 'Cum sit tam pauper, quomodo?' Caecus amat—

we have one of Martial's favorite methods of constructing an epigram: by a statement in the exposition, a transitional question, and an answer in the conclusion. Sometimes he develops a little dialogue out of this form:

> Petit Gemellus nuptias Maronillae
> et cupit et instat et precatur et donat.
> Adeone pulchra est? Immo foedius nil est.
> Quid ergo in illa petitur et placet? Tussit. (I 10)

Another form to which he is partial is a combination of question, answer, and comment:

> Esse quid hoc dicam quod olent tua basia murram
> quodque tibi est numquam non alienus odor?
> hoc mihi suspectum est, quod oles bene, Postume, semper:
> Postume, non bene olet qui bene semper olet. (II 12)

Martial's favorite ways of opening an epigram, then, are with a statement in the second person, a question, an indirect quotation. He uses habitually some form of direct address. In addition to the varieties already mentioned, he employs apostrophe, exhortation, exclamation: "I, felix rosa" (VII 89); "Sili, Castalidum decus sororum" (IV 14); "Barbara pyramidum sileat miracula Memphis" (Spec. 1); "Quantus, io, Latias mundi concentus ad aras" (VIII 4).

Occasionally he will develop one of the three simple elements of exposition, transition, and conclusion to a considerable length. One of his methods of doing this has already been mentioned: his use of several questions and answers so as to produce a short dialogue. Another of his methods is enumeration, of details or of specific instances. An example is III 63:

> Cotile, bellus homo es: dicunt hoc, Cotile, multi.
> audio: sed quid sit, dic mihi, bellus homo?
> 'Bellus homo est, flexos qui digerit ordine crines,
> balsama qui semper, cinnama semper olet;
> cantica qui Nili, qui Gaditana susurrat,
> qui movet in varios bracchia volso modos, *etc.*[8]

Much like the preceding are those epigrams which he develops by a series of comparisons, such as II 43 or VIII 33. But the simple epigrams are more numerous and more typical of Martial than the developed, which remain after all the exception, not the rule.

A thorough classification of Martial's ways of making a point is perhaps impossible. Only an indication of some of the more

[8] For examples of various kinds of enumeration, see II 14, VII 10, VII 92.

frequent will be attempted here. A great many of his epigrams depend for their point upon surprising or startling the reader. This surprise is effected by several means. Sometimes what the poet says is in itself startling, because of its apparent impossibility or its incongruity, as in the conclusion of Spec. 11:

> deprendat vacuo venator in aere praedam,
> si captare feras aucupis arte placet.

The same device appears in II 78, although here it is used with an ironical implication:

> Aestivo serves ubi piscem tempore, quaeris?
> In thermis serva, Caeciliane, tuis.[9]

More often, however, the surprise is less in what Martial says than in the way he says it. He likes to work up a suspense or deliberately to mislead the reader, so that the solution of the difficulty, when it comes, is contrary to the reader's expectation. This device, technically known as paraprosdokia, is used with signal effect in VI 51:

> Quod convivaris sine me tam saepe, Luperce,
> inveni noceam qua ratione tibi.
> irascor: licet usque voces mittasque rogesque—
> 'Quid facies?' inquit. Quid faciam? veniam.[10]

Other and not dissimilar means of securing this effect are antithesis, paradox, oxymoron, and hyperbole. Antithesis gives point to the conclusion of II 68:

> servom si potes, Ole, non habere,
> et regem potes, Ole, non habere.

Paradox is one of Martial's favorite figures; in XII 46 we find it combined with oxymoron:

> Difficilis facilis, iucundus acerbus es idem:
> nec tecum possum vivere nec sine te.[11]

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[9] See also IV 2 and V 17.

[10] See also I 10, I 28, III 57, V 47.

[11] See also II 80, III 10, V 81, VI 41.

The whole point of III 35,

> Artis Phidiacae toreuma clarum
> pisces aspicis: adde aquam, natabunt—

depends upon mere hyperbole; more often, however, we find the hyperbole combined with some other figure. In III 25 it is combined with an ambiguity, a play upon the two kinds of frigidity:

> Si temperari balneum cupis fervens,
> Faustine, quod vix Iulianus intraret,
> roga lavetur rhetorem Sabineium.
> Neronianas is refrigerat thermas.

Furthermore, even plainer than in the preceding is the ironical implication of the hyperbole in VI 53:

> Lotus nobiscum est, hilaris cenavit, et idem
> inventus mane est mortuus Andragoras.
> Tam subitae mortis causam, Faustine, requiris?
> In somnis medicum viderat Hermocraten.

Irony, in fact, is one of Martial's most frequent satirical weapons. It rarely takes the form of downright sarcasm; he does not often say the opposite of what he means. Rather, he deals in innuendo, he damns by implication. Straightforward, bludgeoning abuse is not his line; even if his satire sounds far from over-delicate or subtle to modern ears, it yet involves a certain indirection. In VII 59, for instance,

> Non cenat sine apro noster, Tite, Caecilianus.
> bellum convivam Caecilianus habet—

or in VI 24,

> Nil lascivius est Charisiano:
> Saturnalibus ambulat togatus—

although no doubt the point is obvious enough, still the method employed is not direct statement.[12] We have already seen how the same effect is sometimes secured by means of a surprising incongruity or an hyperbole. Another device which Martial

[12] For other illustrations see II 58, II 71, V 29, V 53, VII 11.

is little humor, much moral fervor and exhortation to reform. The work is free from classical influence.[6]

In two respects the book is significant for the history of the English epigram. In the first place, Crowley's choice of the word *epigram* shows that while the existence of such a *genre* was more or less recognized, popular notions as to its nature were hazy; Crowley himself probably regarded the epigram as no more nor less than a short satire, a conception the origin of which it is not difficult to understand. The epigram is always closely allied with the satire; they flourish simultaneously; they deal with the same material, and the difference is chiefly one of form, with this difference in spirit, that the satire is likely to have a more earnest tone and a more serious purpose than the epigram. Of the intimate connection between the two species, Crowley's work is an excellent instance.

In the second place, this book is prophetic of a literary phenomenon which we shall find occurring in the early seventeenth century, when type-satire is converted into a series of epigrams.[7] The type-satire, which was a heritage from the middle ages, consisted in a series of satirical portraits, within a framework, of classes or types of men, arranged according to vices, habits, trades, or similar distinctive features. This literary form flourished in England in the sixteenth century until about 1570, especially from 1550 to 1570; and Crowley's volume is only one of a large number of similar works.[8] In the 1590's this taste revived in force, but its product was then modified by classical and other influences which had meanwhile come in—among them that of Martial. It was then seen that, if the framework were eliminated and each type given a concise description ending in a point of wit, a series of epigrams would result. It must have been some such development that Crowley was blindly feeling after. However, not having, or at least not

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[6] On Crowley see R. M. Alden, *Rise of Formal Satire in England*, pp. 60–61; and *Cam. Hist. Eng. Lit.*, III, 112.

[7] See below, chap. 4, § 1.

[8] On this whole subject see H. V. Routh, *Cam. Hist. Eng. Lit.*, III, chap. 5, "The Progress of Social Literature in Tudor Times."

taking advantage of, any epigrammatic models, he failed to make an advance on the medieval form. In truth, the time was not yet ripe for the amalgamation of the medieval and the classical; popular taste did not invite it; and Crowley's work has its significance both as illustrating the medievalism of the mid-century and as forecasting, if only by its title, a later development.

Even though, like Crowley, Heywood directs his appeal to the popular taste, his productions are indubitably epigrams. They call for consideration because of their large number, because they form the first collections of true epigrams published with that title, and because they were long popular, especially at the close of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century, and were not without effect in determining the English conception of the epigram.

Concerning Heywood's education we have no definite information; but, as he belonged to the circle of Sir Thomas More, he must have come more or less into touch with the new movement of the Renaissance. Heywood, however, could not be called a humanist, although it must have been from the contemporary humanistic practice of publishing collections of epigrams that he got the idea of his own collection, in which the form is turned to popular uses. Heywood's real importance, of course, lies in the history of English comedy. He himself was a sort of jester, famous for his wit, and a favorite at court.[9] I refer to his work as popular because neither in style nor in substance does it seem meant for a select audience. Although no doubt he wished to entertain courtiers and courtly circles, his appeal is not to their new and classical tastes, but to their native English love of rude and homely humor; and his reading public was by no means restricted to the court. His form is calculated to please the general taste; he uses the old "tumbling metre" or "doggerel," old-fashioned even in 1550, and his diction is like his meter and his spirit—rough. In his epigrams he has

[9] For Heywood's life (1497?–1580?), see *D. N. B.*, article by A. W. Ward.

Hermes Martia saeculi voluptas,
Hermes omnibus eruditus armis,
Hermes et gladiator et magister, etc. (V 24)

Appellat rigida tristis me voce Secundus:
audis et nescis, Baccara, quid sit opus.
pensio te coram petitur clareque palamque:
audis et nescis, Baccara, quid sit opus.
esse queror gelidasque mihi tritasque lacernas:
audis et nescis, Baccara, quid sit opus. (VII 92, vv. 3–8)

Primum est ut praestes, si quid te, Cinna, rogabo;
illud deinde sequens ut cito, Cinna, neges.
diligo praestantem; non odi, Cinna, negantem:
sed tu nec praestas nec cito, Cinna, negas. (VII 43)

The repetition at the end of clauses is usually, as in the preceding, varied by the use of different forms and constructions. Sometimes Martial combines these two types of repetition, as in the first two lines of XII 79:

Donavi tibi multa quae rogasti;
donavi tibi plura quam rogasti.

Again, Martial uses the first words of one clause as the last of the next, or the last of one as the first of the next; he even does both:

Pauper videri Cinna vult; et est pauper. (VIII 19)

Cogit me Titus actitare causas
et dicit mihi saepe 'Magna res est.'
Res magna est, Tite, quam facit colonus. (I 17)

κοινὰ φίλων haec sunt, haec sunt tua, Candide, κοινά. (II 43, v. 1)

Finally, as an illustration of the lengths to which repetition can be carried, IX 97 may be cited:

Rumpitur invidia quidam, carissime Iuli,
quod me Roma legit, rumpitur invidia.
rumpitur invidia quod turba semper in omni
monstramur digito, rumpitur invidia.
rumpitur invidia tribuit quod Caesar uterque
ius mihi natorum, rumpitur invidia, etc.

He uses the same words, but in opposite relations—that is, with a reversal of the thought:

> Insequeris, fugio; fugis, insequor; haec mens est:
> velle tuum nolo, Dindyme, nolle volo. (V 83)

Martial's method of fitting the structure of his epigrams and the devices of parallelism and repetition just enumerated into the structure of his verse is also noteworthy. He commonly ends exposition, transition, and conclusion at the end of a line, often in his shorter pieces allotting to each element a couplet or a single verse. Frequently he begins with a couplet of exposition, makes the transition in a line, and devotes the final verse to making the point; or he opens with two couplets of rhetorical questions and gives over the final couplet to the conclusion. Again, he likes to save his point until the final word of the last line, especially when it is intended to surprise the reader. In that case, all save the final word will usually be filled with a transitional question. The same strictness of form is exhibited in his treatment of parallelism and repetition; he arranges to have the repeated words at the beginning or the end of lines, or at least in the same metrical position in succeeding lines. He is especially given to introducing the name of the victim of his satire in line after line in this fashion, so as to produce a sneering effect.

In form as in substance Martial's work is typical of his age. He lived at a time when the art of rhetoric was as highly developed as it has ever been, and when, moreover, it constituted the chief—almost the only—subject of education. The natural result is seen in his masterly control of devices for heightening the effect and point of his epigrams, for upon them he lavishes all the resources of the most elaborate rhetoric. His brilliance, his polish and vivacity, are in large measure due to his use of parallelism and repetition. Both these devices and also his use of question and answer, of quotation direct and indirect, of the first and second persons, of dialogue, of exclamation and

apostrophe, impart to his style an emphasis, a liveliness and animation, which are among its most conspicuous characteristics. With all that terseness and concision which is essential to the successful epigram and which is in none more evident than in Martial's, he has managed to secure a colloquial ease which makes his way of writing as unconstrained as a casual conversation. This quality too is the result of his way of constructing and developing his epigrams.

It is therefore in large measure due to the devices which we have been discussing that his epigrams have attained their effect of reality and individuality, that in reading them we seem to be overhearing the talk of two real men. In many if not most of his epigrams he speaks in the first person; he addresses some one by name, and refers to a common acquaintance. When he begins, "Do you see that fellow yonder, Decianus, that needs a haircut?"[16] we seem to be present at the gossip of the baths or the porticos. It is thus that Martial contrives to give the air of writing about, and to, definite and actual people.

Both his manner and his matter are calculated to render as clear to us as possible the world he lived in. He draws his material from the ordinary life and the everyday interests of himself and his acquaintances, and he treats it, though in the most finished style and with the most finished art, yet without imagination and without emotion. We see both the author and the age through the least distorting of mediums. And this quality is the quality of the time: in fresher, less sophisticated, and more imaginative periods there is no demand for this microscopic realism, for these *minutiae* of common life and this mirror-like verisimilitude.

Martial's spiritual quality, or rather his lack of it, is also significant. For all his sentimental pathos and his genuine expression of friendship, he is wanting in poetic feeling and imagination. Superficial both in feeling and in vision, he was above all observant and easy-going, but easy-going without

[16] I 24: Aspicis incomptis illum, Deciane, capillis?

benevolence, even without good nature. He makes no pretense to that earnestness which most satirists affect if they do not feel. Although sharp and clever, quick of eye and of wit, a finished workman and complete master of his medium, he gives at best an accurate rendering of the outside of a society which even in its brilliance was frivolous and squalid.

If we ask ourselves, then, when we may expect to find Martial influencing modern literature, we need be at no loss for an answer: in an age which appreciates his literary skill, which is interested in his subject-matter, and which sympathizes with his spirit. An age which exalts Martial, we may be sure, is a disillusioned and skeptical, a sophisticated and cynical age; it holds up realism as the end of art, for it understands and has faith in only the concrete and the immediate. Martial cannot appeal to an imaginative and idealistic age which trusts enthusiasm and generous aspiration, which cherishes high hopes and thinks more of the possibilities of human life than of the spotted actuality.

CHAPTER II

THE ENGLISH EPIGRAM BEFORE 1590

As we approach the English epigram of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, it becomes necessary for us to decide what, out of the vast mass of verse produced during that period, we are to treat. Fortunately, our definition of the epigram affords us an excellent criterion: it includes all short poems terminating in a point of wit. In addition to these we shall have to consider all works which their authors chose to call epigrams or which have been so denominated by later editors or critics—as a matter of fact, we shall find few which do not also fall within our definition. Some forms of verse, however, I have arbitrarily ruled out: for example, the riddle, the acrostic, the emblem, and the 'device.' Furthermore, the sonnet—in spite of its frequent epigrammatic quality, especially when it ends in a couplet—I have excluded, for the reason that the sonnet by itself offers an immense field of study, and that its tradition is distinct from that of the epigram.

Before we turn to the English epigrams, it would be well to have in mind some general notion of the sources which were available to the epigrammatists with whom we shall be dealing. First, there was the whole body of antique epigrammatic literature, comprising, besides Martial, the Greek Anthology[1] and the writers who derive from it, especially Ausonius.[2] In spite of the fact that Martial's epigrams and the Anthology have much in common, it is not at all difficult, in practice, to dis-

[1] i.e., the Planudean Anthology; the Palatine Anthology was not discovered until 1607, and not published until the eighteenth century—not in full until the nineteenth.

[2] The influence of Catullus and the minor Latin epigrammatists upon the English epigram is negligible.

tinguish their respective influences. Generally speaking, in comparison with Martial, the Anthology deals less with the details of city life, inclines less to social satire, in style is less personal and individual, less colloquial, less heightened with rhetorical devices. It is more imaginative and emotional—in short, more poetic. It is especially characterized by a lively play of poetic fancy, and abounds in *jeux d'esprit* dealing with mythology, works of art, and natural curiosities. Containing less of the satirical, it inclines rather to the purely humorous, to the epigram which recounts a funny story or a clever bit of repartee. The gnomic element in the Anthology is larger than in Martial; he, to be sure, often points an epigram with an aphorism, but he infrequently gives us an epigram that is sententious throughout. Martial, though he felt the city-dweller's liking for country life, was less keenly alive than the Greek epigrammatists to the beauties of nature. Finally, love-poems—almost altogether absent from Martial's work—constitute one of the largest classes in the Anthology.

In the second place, for material, but not of course for models, the English epigrammatists could go to a great body of medieval, semi-medieval, and contemporary writing, both Latin and vernacular: to *exempla, fabliaux,* and *facetiae,* to collections of adages such as *Catonis Disticha, P. Syri Sententiae,* and the *Adagia* and *Apophthegmata* of Erasmus, to fables, jestbooks, and such type-satires as *The Ship of Fools.* Here they could find humorous anecdotes and witty answers, all sorts of proverbial lore and didactic incidents, much material for heavy moral invectives against typical vices, such as gluttony and avarice, and against typical classes of men, such as misers and monks. The difference from Martial is obvious.

Again, the neo-Latin epigram of the Renaissance, in itself an enormous literature, was available. It originated little, but drew copiously from the Anthology, Ausonius, and the medieval literature just mentioned, as well as to a lesser extent from Martial. It acted as a broking-house, assembling and mingling all that preceded, and passing it on thus combined to later times.

It is this body of material that makes the history of the epigram so confused; one can never be sure that an English epigrammatist is borrowing directly from the Anthology or from a medieval work, for he may be taking at second-hand what a neo-Latin writer has borrowed from the original source. But at any rate the neo-Latin epigram is particularly weak where Martial is particularly strong—in social satire, in individuality, in detailed representation of the *milieu*.

Finally, there was the continental vernacular lyric, of less importance, but worthy of mention. In later years it came more and more to draw upon the Anthology, Ausonius, and the neo-Latin epigram for material which it used in short lyric forms such as the madrigal. From these productions Englishmen borrowed both form and substance, with the result that we find in English examples of *strambotti,* madrigals, and the like, which are also epigrams. In general, these foreign lyrics are naturally more imaginative and more emotional than Martial; they deal especially with love; and indeed it is often difficult, in dealing with the English imitations, to discern the dividing line between lyric and epigram.

These four groups were the sources upon which the English epigrammatists drew in the earlier part of the sixteenth century. It was a time of chaos in the history of the English epigram. Until the last decade of the century, the epigram never became a type with a continuous history and a real development. Before 1590, what epigrams were written were scattering, sporadic, subject to many contrary influences, drawing their material from many incompatible sources, without recognized models. The laws that govern the *genre* were not realized, and no tradition was developed by which writers might be guided. We may, however, roughly divide the epigrams of this period into three classes, according as they are related to (1) popular literature, (2) the 'new poetry' inaugurated by Wyatt and Surrey, and (3) Elizabethan poetry. Until after 1590, we shall find few traces of Martial's influence.

1. The Popular Epigram

In the year 1550 were published what appear to be the first two collections of epigrams in English.[3] These were Robert Crowley's *One and thyrtye Epigrammes,*[4] and John Heywood's *An hundred Epigrammes.*[5] These works have this in common, that they are both intended for a popular audience, and are therefore predominantly medieval—for in the year 1550 the taste for classical literature was still limited to the very few who had been affected by the Renaissance. Inasmuch as Heywood continued to produce epigrams at intervals until 1562, when his whole six hundred were published together, we shall take up Crowley first, although he was the younger man by some twenty years.

Crowley, who was born about 1518, was at Oxford in various academic capacities from 1534 until 1542, and in 1559 was an archdeacon of Hereford. He was a printer, a well-known preacher, a staunch Protestant, and a man of education and prominence. However, so far as one can judge from the *One and thyrtye Epigrammes*—which number as a matter of fact thirty-three—he was untouched by the Renaissance, except in the choice of a title. These so-called epigrams are in reality not epigrams at all, but short satires of the medieval style, dealing chiefly in that type-satire which *The Ship of Fools* had helped make popular. In each 'epigram' the author attacks an abuse of the day; he often reprehends types classified according to their habits or their vices: *Of Abbayes, Of Alehouses, Of Almes houses, Of Baudes, Of Beggars, Of Brawlars, Of Idle persons, Of Flatterars, Of Marchauntes, Of Obstinate Papistes*—these titles will give some notion of the contents of the volume. There

[3] Not the first to be written, however: for Wyatt, see below, p. 312.

[4] J. M. Cowper, Early Eng. Text Soc., *Extra Ser.*, No. 15.

[5] For bibliography of Heywood, see *Camb. Hist. Eng. Lit.*, V, 450. My references are to *Proverbs and Epigrams,* Spenser Soc. *Publ.*, No. 1.

is little humor, much moral fervor and exhortation to reform. The work is free from classical influence.[6]

In two respects the book is significant for the history of the English epigram. In the first place, Crowley's choice of the word *epigram* shows that while the existence of such a *genre* was more or less recognized, popular notions as to its nature were hazy; Crowley himself probably regarded the epigram as no more nor less than a short satire, a conception the origin of which it is not difficult to understand. The epigram is always closely allied with the satire; they flourish simultaneously; they deal with the same material, and the difference is chiefly one of form, with this difference in spirit, that the satire is likely to have a more earnest tone and a more serious purpose than the epigram. Of the intimate connection between the two species, Crowley's work is an excellent instance.

In the second place, this book is prophetic of a literary phenomenon which we shall find occurring in the early seventeenth century, when type-satire is converted into a series of epigrams.[7] The type-satire, which was a heritage from the middle ages, consisted in a series of satirical portraits, within a framework, of classes or types of men, arranged according to vices, habits, trades, or similar distinctive features. This literary form flourished in England in the sixteenth century until about 1570, especially from 1550 to 1570; and Crowley's volume is only one of a large number of similar works.[8] In the 1590's this taste revived in force, but its product was then modified by classical and other influences which had meanwhile come in—among them that of Martial. It was then seen that, if the framework were eliminated and each type given a concise description ending in a point of wit, a series of epigrams would result. It must have been some such development that Crowley was blindly feeling after. However, not having, or at least not

[6] On Crowley see R. M. Alden, *Rise of Formal Satire in England*, pp. 60–61; and *Cam. Hist. Eng. Lit.*, III, 112.

[7] See below, chap. 4, § 1.

[8] On this whole subject see H. V. Routh, *Cam. Hist. Eng. Lit.*, III, chap. 5, "The Progress of Social Literature in Tudor Times."

taking advantage of, any epigrammatic models, he failed to make an advance on the medieval form. In truth, the time was not yet ripe for the amalgamation of the medieval and the classical; popular taste did not invite it; and Crowley's work has its significance both as illustrating the medievalism of the mid-century and as forecasting, if only by its title, a later development.

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[9] For Heywood's life (1497?–1580?), see *D. N. B.*, article by A. W. Ward.

two intentions, the didactic and the humorous, and he often combines them. His work falls into four classes: the proverbial, the allegorical, the merely humorous, and the abusive.

The proverbial is the most numerous variety among his epigrams. The *Three hundred Epigrammes, upon three hundred proverbes,* which constitute the second, third, and fourth hundreds of Heywood's six hundred epigrams, are constructed exclusively of proverbial material; and many in the first, fifth, and sixth hundreds belong to the same class. Heywood treats his proverbs in various ways: he gives an example, an exception, or some comment of his own; sometimes the result is humorous, sometimes didactic:

> A cat may looke on a kyng, and what of that.
> When a cat so lookth: a cat is but a cat.
>
> God sendth fortune to fooles, not to every chone:
> Thou art a foole, and yet fortune thou hast none.
>
> Who wedth ere he be wise, shall die ere he thrive.
> Then shalt not thou be wedded and riche alive.[10]
>
> Every man bastyth the fat hog, tis agreed
> That those hogs shall have most help that have least need.[11]

In *The Arte of Rhetorique,* Thomas Wilson recommends Heywood's proverbs as a source from which to draw similitudes and allegories.[12] Likewise, many of the epigrams which are not based on proverbs relate fables, apologues, parables. Although the purpose of these is in the main didactic, humor is combined

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[10] *Upon Proverbes,* Nos. 117, 124, 28.

[11] *Upon Proverbes,* No. 286: cf. Martial, V 81:

> Semper pauper eris, si pauper es, Aemiliane.
> dantur opes nullis nunc nisi divitibus.

See *Davison's Poetical Rhapsody,* ed. Bullen I, 95, for seven epigrams attributed to F. Davison on this theme. I append one:

> Fail ye of wealth, of wealth ye still will fail,
> None but fat sows are now greased in the tail.

Davison's use of balanced repetition in chiastic order shows by contrast how far Heywood was from Martial's style.

[12] Ed. G. H. Mair, pp. 176, 189.

with instruction. Sometimes Heywood tells a little story of human beings, which bears a moral significance, but more often his characters are foxes, cocks, hens, oaks, reeds, or the wind—familiar to readers of Aesop and La Fontaine.

Another large section of Heywood's work is devoted to the humorous anecdote, often very slight, amounting to no more than a bit of repartee. An interesting feature of these epigrams is the dialogue form into which many of them are cast, with no comment from the author. In some of them Heywood approximates Martial. Others more closely resemble the jestbooks. The following are instances of those which approach Martial:

> Wyfe, of ten babes betwene us by encrease growne,
> Thou saist I have but nyne. no mo of your owne.
> Of all thynges encresyng, as my conscience lythe,
> The parson must needes have the tenth for the tythe.
>
> Doth your mastershyppe remember your dette to mee?
> Remember my dette? ye freende, I warrant thee:
> I remember it so, that though I say it,
> Ile never forget it, nor never pay it.[13]
>
> Weddyng and hangyng, are destiny I see.
> Weddyng or hangyng, which is best, sir (quoth shee?)
> Forsooth good wife, hangyng I think best (quoth hee)
> So helpe me god, good husband, so thinketh mee.
> O how like lambes, man and wyfe here agree.[14]

Closely related to the preceding class and sometimes indistinguishable from it is the epigram of abuse. In this variety Heywood exhibits a forthright bludgeoning vigor with little subtlety; what he has to say he says directly, seldom with circumlocutions, hints, or innuendo. The following is less unlike Martial than the majority of Heywood's abusive epigrams:

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[13] 5th hundred, Nos. 27, 44.

[14] *Upon Proverbes*, No. 6: cf. Martial, VIII 35:

> Cum sitis similes paresque vita,
> uxor pessima, pessimus maritus,
> miror non bene convenire vobis.

For versions of the same by Parkhurst (in Kendall's translation) and by Jonson after Parkhurst, see below, p. 398, note 23.

> My honny bes, blacke and white doth set the out nette
> Thy here whyte as perle, thy teeth blacke as jette.[15]

On Heywood's sources no work has been done.[16] His verses have two obvious affinities: on the one hand, he draws copiously from popular proverbial lore, and may have made some use of collections of Latin *adagia;* and on the other, he has much in common with the contemporary jestbooks. At any rate, his closest relation is to the non-epigrammatic medieval literature which I cited as the second group of sources available to the sixteenth-century epigrammatist. There may also be a connection between Heywood's work and that of the less classical of the neo-Latin epigrammatists. Certainly his use of anecdote and repartee reminds one strongly of More's and Parkhurst's Latin epigrams.[17]

Heywood's relation to Martial is doubtful. He has borrowed little; the two parallels which I have cited are scarcely enough to prove any acquaintance on Heywood's part with Martial. Yet the two have something in common. Both, for example, show a taste for pithy sayings: yet Heywood's continuous sententiousness is essentially different from Martial's way of pointing an epigram with an aphorism. Both also are satiric; but again Heywood's abuse of general vices—folly, talkativeness, dishonesty—is unlike Martial's ironical ridicule of individual manners and personal foibles.

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[15] 5th hundred, No. 23.

[16] Dodd (*Epigrammatists,* p. 170) compares a Latin distich by Nicholas Baxius with No. 42 of Heywood's fifth hundred.

Gabriel Harvey has left a note at the end of his Chaucer: "Sum of Heywoods Epigrams, ar supposed to be the conceits, & devises of pleasant Sir Thomas More." (*Gabriel Harvey's Marginalia,* ed. G. C. Moore Smith, p. 234.) This is not improbable.

[17] For More's Latin epigrams, see Cayley, *Memoirs of Sir Thomas More,* II, 259 ff. Bishop Parkhurst's epigrams were published in 1573 under the title *Ludicra sive Epigrammata Juvenilia.* Not having seen this work, I judge of it by the eighty-seven epigrams given in translation by Timothy Kendall in his *Flowers of Epigrammes* (Spenser Soc. reprint, pp. 203–236). As represented by Kendall, Parkhurst is exclusively satiric and humorous; he abounds in jests and pranks ascribed to court fools and jesters. Yet evidently he was a close student of Martial, whom he sometimes follows very closely. I refer to him, not as a source, but as in some respects a parallel, for Heywood. See pp. 319–321 below.

When we turn from substance and compare Heywood's epigrams with Martial's as to form, we find ourselves in a similar condition of doubt. Not infrequently Heywood uses the same methods of structure as Martial: the same statement and comment:

> Thy head is great, and yet seemth that head but thin:
> Without here without, and without wit within;

the same question and answer:

> Ist maistry to disdeigne thinges by envyse scoole?
> Nay nay, no more maistry then to be a foole;

and the same statement-question-answer and question-answer-comment:

> Thy dettar wyll paie thee shortly: shortly?
> He will make that short lye, a longe lye, dread I;

> Of heaven or of hell, which go folke fastest to?
> To hell foole to hell, go fer more fast they do.
> The hie way to both lyth thus as clarks tell,
> Up hill to heavenward, downe hill to hell.[18]

There is a similar likeness in the kinds of point employed by the two men. Heywood's favorite point, the balanced antithesis illustrated in the first and fourth of the epigrams just quoted, is common in Martial. But Heywood is much more given than Martial to punning and to playing with sound, as in the third epigram above. Less often he plays with a double meaning, as in No. 32 of the fifth hundred:

> I see men heare, though they eares have none.
> Thou doste heare me speake, thine eares beyng gone.

But in way of making a point Heywood is nowhere closer to Martial than in No. 25 of the first hundred,

> Jacke (quoth his father) how shall I ease take?
> If I stand, my legges ake, and if I kneele,
> My knees ake, If I goe, then my feete ake,
> If I lie, my backe akthe, If I sit I feele
> My hyps ake: and leane I never so weele,
> My elbowes ake: Sir (quoth Jacke) peyn to exile,
> Sens all these ease not, best ye hang a while,

[18] 6th hundred, Nos. 56, 84; 5th hundred, No. 18; 6th hundred, No. 5.

in which the surprising solution of a difficulty is precisely in Martial's manner. Furthermore, in spite of the roughness of Heywood's style, he sometimes reminds one of Martial by his parallelism and repetition, as in No. 21 of the first hundred:

> Where will is good, and wit is yll,
> There wisdome can no maner skyll.
> Where wit is good, and will is yll,
> There wisdome sitteth all silent still.
> Where wit and will are both two yll,
> There wisdome no maie meddle will,
> Where wit and will well ordred bee,
> There wisdome makth a trinitee.

Heywood's rhetorical devices, however, are showy and extreme; they do not permeate and color all his writings, as do Martial's.

Indeed, their differences are more striking than their resemblances. Heywood is didactic, earnest, heavy, crude; his satire is straightforward and blunt. Above all, in spite of his colloquial quality, he is vague and general and impersonal; he does not give us the same graphic sense of himself or of the reality and individuality of the people he mentions that Martial does. He is lacking in specific detail; from his pages we get no such picture of his environment as we do from those of the Latin epigrammatist. Most of what Heywood says is applicable anywhere at any time, whereas, though no doubt we recognize human nature as Martial portrays it, Martial's writing is full of realistic detail which is peculiar to the Rome he knew. Furthermore, the spirit of the two men is unlike. True, they were both prosaic in temperament; yet Heywood breathes a bluff and hearty vigor which is unknown to the cynical and jaded Roman.

In fine, then, the question of Heywood's knowledge of Martial must be left open. Neither ignorance nor acquaintanceship can be proved. If there is any indebtedness on Heywood's part, it is slight, evidenced chiefly by a few elementary tricks of form. Whether Heywood intended to imitate Martial, we cannot determine; but in truth the time had not yet come in

England for thorough-going and intelligent imitation of Martial. National taste was not yet ready for the classical epigram. People still wanted the medieval literature to which they were accustomed: type-satire, stories like those in the jestbooks, familiar proverbs and homely wisdom. Their sense of form was still immature. Moreover, there was as yet no *milieu* favorable to the epigram. London was not yet metropolitan enough, and London social life was still undeveloped. England, in general, was neither disillusioned nor sophisticated. None of the conditions, that is, which we specified as necessary for a general diffusion of Martial's influence was yet in existence.

2. The "New Poetry" and the Epigram

In the preceding section we discovered one reason for Martial's lack of influence before 1590: that the popular taste was still too medieval to welcome or to tolerate classical imitations. In this section we shall discover another reason for the neglect of Martial: namely, that the taste of the few educated men who ushered in the English Renaissance[19] was antipathetic to him. We have now to consider, that is, the "new poetry"[20] begun by Wyatt and Surrey and continued by writers of decreasing ability till it reached its nadir in Kendall's *Flowers of Epigrammes,* 1577. Except Kendall, who must receive separate treatment, these men were primarily lyricists, and their epigrams were only occasional, to be found scattered here and there

[19] The importance of drawing a sharp distinction between intellectual classes in the first half or three-quarters of the sixteenth century can hardly be overemphasized: between the "courtly makers," whose taste was formed on French and Italian literature and whose chief literary interest was in poetry; between the humanists, whose taste was classical, who wrote prose and whose interest was in scholarship, education, and government; and the vast majority, many of them no doubt men of high education, whose tastes, interests, and outlook were still medieval. That some men display the traits of more than one of these classes, no one would deny; but the current tendency not to distinguish them sharply enough results in frequent confusion.

[20] I have adopted this term, failing to find a better, from the title of the fifth chapter of *Cam. Hist. Eng. Lit.*, III, in which Mr. Harold H. Child treats the "school" we are considering.

through their work; the dominant influence on them was that of the poetry, chiefly lyrical, of the Italian Renaissance, though a medieval strain was not lacking. We shall consider their epigrams under three heads: those in imitation of Italian vernacular lyrics, written as a matter of fact only by Wyatt; those in imitation of neo-Latin epigrams; and those related to Martial; and then we shall discuss Kendall's work.

Wyatt, the pioneer in so many directions in English poetry, was the pioneer also in the writing of epigrams. In this work, however, he had no followers—in the adaptation, that is, of Italian lyrics in the form of English epigrams. It is not improbable that Wyatt himself had no conscious intention of writing epigrams as such; he may have purposed merely to introduce the *strambotto* into English verse.[21] Undoubtedly, however, a number of his small pieces terminate in a point of wit, and therefore fall within our definition of the epigram. They are modeled after the *Strambotti* of Serafino. Out of the thirty-three such productions which we possess by Wyatt,[22] six are direct borrowings from the *Strambotti;* almost all of the epigrams are in *ottava rima,* the meter of the *Strambotti,* while the exceptions are in similar verse-forms. A large majority of them deal with the topic of love in fanciful, ingenious, "conceited" fashion. Two of the titles assigned in *Tottel* are: *Comparison of love to a streame falling from the Alpes,* and *The*

[21] His epigrams are not so designated in either *Tottel* or the Egerton MS, which is largely autograph and had Wyatt's personal supervision; see Padelford, *Early 16th Century Lyrics,* p. 149. Warton (*Hist. English Poetry,* ed. Hazlitt, IV, 47) refers to "Tagus, fare well" as a "little ode, or rather epigram"—the earliest application of the term I have found. G. F. Nott was first to assemble the small poems under the heading, "Songs and Epigrams," and says (*Works of Surrey and Wyatt,* II, cxxvi): "In his Epigrams, for I know not by what other name to call his smaller poems . . ." Since Nott, the designation has been generally accepted.

[22] About thirty were printed in *Tottel* (ed. E. Arber, Eng. Reprints), 1557. Miss A. K. Foxwell (*Poems of Sir Thomas Wiat*) adds three from MS sources; hers is the most complete edition of Wyatt; for his epigrams see I, 45–62, 340, 366, 382, 386.

For the date of Wyatt's epigrams, which can be certainly fixed only by his death in 1542, see Foxwell, II, 56–57; W. E. Simonds, *Sir Thomas Wyatt and his Poems,* where the poems are dated by their arrangement in the Egerton MS and by internal evidence which is seldom convincing.

lover compareth his hart to the overcharged gonne. These very titles indicate the kind of cleverness cultivated by Wyatt, which consists in the working out of far-fetched similitudes, a comparison of things unlike—a device not used by Martial. An epigram, with Wyatt, is a short poem devoted to the elaboration of a single 'conceit.' In subject, spirit, and style Wyatt derives from the vernacular lyric of the Italian Renaissance.[23]

Of Wyatt's successors, few wrote epigrams, and these few did not follow Wyatt's lead. Instead, they turned to the work of the Renaissance Latinists, especially to that portion derived from or influenced by the Greek Anthology. In the work of other men than Wyatt and Surrey in *Tottel's Miscellany,* a dozen or so epigrams are to be found, all but two by Nicholas Grimald. Grimald has received credit as "to some extent a forerunner of the later classical influence";[24] it was to neo-Latin verse, however, not to the classics, that he went for his epigrams. They come from the apothegmatic literature and the Latin epigram of the Renaissance; they are gnomic or didactic, and mortuary; two are from Erasmus's *Adagia,* one certainly and probably two from Latin epitaphs by Walter Haddon, and two from Beza, from whom also an epigram by an unknown author is derived. They belong to that branch of epigrammatic literature which had its root in the Greek Anthology; therefore they mark a new departure in the English epigram. Even of their meter this statement is true, for Grimald's favorite is the penta-

[23]For Wyatt's sources, see: G. F. Nott's ed., II, notes; E. Koeppel, *Stud. z. Gesch. des engl. Petrarchismus im 16 Jahr., Roman. Forsch.,* V. A convenient summary is given and a few new sources added in *Foxwell,* II, 56 ff.

Wyatt's sources are as follows (references are to *Foxwell,* I): Nos. 3, 5, 10, 11, 15, 23, from Serafino; 14, 17, from Petrarch; 4, 19, from Ariosto; 12, from Melin de Saint-Gelais; 28 and "Stond who so list," p. 366, from Seneca's *Thyestes;* 16, from Josephus; 22, from Pandulphus. No. 26 comes from Ausonius (after Plato), the story of the two men, the rope, and the gold; it alone of Wyatt's work is in the epigrammatic tradition. Sève, Marot, and Skelton have also been suggested as sources of epigrams by Wyatt.

A few of Wyatt's epigrams are reflective; two tell anecdotes; some in which he laments the hardness of his fate are almost lyrical; but, in spite of exceptions, the statements in the text remain substantially true.

[24] H. H. Child, *Camb. Hist. Eng. Lit.,* III, 203.

meter couplet, though "fourteeners" and "poulter's measure" are also common.[25]

In the direction only pointed out by Grimald, George Turbervile made some real progress. His volume, *Epitaphes, Epigrams, Songs, and Sonets,* first published in 1567,[26] contains some fifty epigrams, the bulk of which are traceable ultimately to the Anthology, but are immediately imitated from Latin translations and imitations of it. I doubt that the author had any first-hand knowledge of the Greek. Twelve of his pieces are from the Latin of Sir Thomas More, six from Ausonius, and at least five—almost certainly more—from the Anthology, through what medium I do not know. We find the same preponderance as in *Tottel* of gnomic and didactic verse: reflection and instruction on friendship, marriage, love, the sins of pride and gluttony, the value and the vanity of pleasure. But Turbervile has a considerable variety; he gives us also humorous and instructive anecdotes, and epigrams of personal abuse on physical peculiarities such as long noses and the ugliness of old age. He is especially fond of subjects drawn from mythology and art—Homer's birthplace, Venus in armor, the nightingale that nested in a picture of Medea, portraits of Echo and Dido. As for his meters, "fourteeners" and "poulter's measure" greatly predominate, but he uses also the alternating rime with concluding couplet (abab, etc., cc) of which *ottava rima,* used by Wyatt, is one form. Turbervile's service to the English epigram consists in his having introduced, to a far larger extent than Grimald, the matter of the Greek Anthology into English verse. Further-

[25] I append a table of such of Grimald's epigrams as I have traced:

Tottel, p. 109: *Mans life after* Possidonius *or* Crates, Metrodorus *minde to the contrarie:* Erasmus, *Adagia,* Chil. II, Centur. iii, Prov. 49; see Greek Anthol., IX, 359, 360. Kendall, pp. 110–111, has Grimald's versions.

p. 108: *Description of Vertue:* Beza, *Poemata* (1713), p. 58; Kendall, p. 160, has Grimald's version.

p. 125: *Of* M. T. Cicero: Beza, *op. cit.,* p. 47; Kendall, p. 159, has another version. In *Tottel,* p. 228, is a similar epitaph on Wyatt by an uncertain author; ascribed in Harl. MS 78 to Sir Anthony St. Leger (see Fluegel, *Neueng. Lesebuch,* p. 390).

See pp. 118–119 for the epitaphs from Haddon's Latin.

Turbervile, pp. 130–131, gives other versions of the two epigrams on marriage, *Tottel,* p. 99, thus pointing to a common source.

[26] Reprinted by J. P. Collier. This reprint is of the 1570 ed.; my references are to it.

more, his work is next in quantity to Heywood's; and as we saw, both Heywood and Wyatt had gone to sources which lay outside the true epigrammatic tradition. Therefore to Turbervile must be given the credit of having been a valuable pioneer in the development of the English epigram. Unfortunately, his work was prevented from having its full effect by his lack of ability as a versifier. It was not good enough as poetry to hold its popularity, and soon became antiquated. No doubt Turbervile's large use of fourteeners and poulter's measure is in part responsible; but the real trouble was that he had no talent for poetry.[26a]

[26a] I append a table of such of Turbervile's epigrams as I have traced. The references to More are to Cayley's *Memoirs*, II, to Ausonius as arranged in Peiper's ed. (Teubner text).

Turbervile	More	Anthology
a) p. 110: Whilst fissher kest:	p. 285	IX 442
b) p. 128: Asclepiad, that greedie:	p. 265	XI 391
c) p. 132: By hap a man:	p. 286	XI 251
d) p. 147: O man of little wit:	p. 283	IX 376
p. 148: A vassell to the winde:	p. 283	IX 376
e) p. 148: Leave off, good Beroe:	p. 287	XI 408
f) p. 149: Stande with thy nose:	p. 339	XI 418
g) p. 149: O Proclus! tis in vaine:	p. 299	XI 268
h) p. 151: At night, when ale:	p. 340	
Men having quaft:	p. 340	
i) p. 152: To drawe the minde:	p. 307	XI 412
j) p. 189: The sonne in lawe:	p. 341	IX 67
Gladde was the sonne:	p. 341	IX 67
k) p. 213: Not he so muche:	p. 268	X 121
p. 214: Of both give mee:	p. 268	X 121
l) p. 214: A misers minde:	p. 266	XI 294
	Ausonius	
m) p. 110: Marcke felt himselfe:	XIX 80	XI 114
n) p. 151: This Rufe his table:	XIX 9	XI 151
o) p. 176: In complete (armour) Pallas:	XIX 64	XVI 174
p) p. 177: Thou witles wight:	XIX 32	
q) p. 177: The scenting hounds:	XIX 35	IX 17, 18
r) p. 241: A man in deepe dispaire:	XIX 14	IX 44
s) p. 123: The poet Homer:		XVI 296
t) p. 150: Thou sielie foule:		IX 346
What (Philomela) meanes:		IX 346
u) p. 176: I, Dido, and the queene:		XVI 151
v) p. 195: A Thracyan boy:		VII 542
w) p. 199: My girle, thou gazest:		VII 669

In his *Flowers of Epigrammes*, Kendall reprints Turbervile's versions as follows: (*a*) on p. 141, (*b*) on p. 148, (*f*) on p. 144, (*h*) on pp. 146–147, (*l*) on p. 147, (*n*) on p. 120, (*o*) on p. 120, (*p*) on p. 116, (*q*) on p. 117, (*v*) on p. 137. On p. 139 he borrows the first four lines of (*k*); on p. 144, the first 16 lines of (*c*). He gives other versions of (*i*) on p. 145, of (*j*) on pp. 140, 164 (as from Beza), of (*r*) on p. 119. (Continued on p. 316.)

The other writers of the "new poetry"—most of them continuators of it when the new poetry had grown out of date—composed a few epigrammatic verses. In the work of Googe, Thynne, Howell, and Breton, and in *The Gorgeous Gallery,* are to be found instances of what may pass for epigrams. These are versified "high sentences" and aphorisms, with a moral and didactic purpose, on abstractions such as love, the golden mean, and various virtues and vices. The taste they evince is medieval, and serves to link this school on the one hand with Heywood, and on the other with the Anthology through its gnomic pieces.[27]

For (*t*), cf. Alciati (see Dodd, *Epigrammatists,* p. 122) and Politian, *Opera* (1553), p. 598.

With (*r*) cf. *Tottel,* p. 82 (by Wyatt); with Turb., p. 74, "Lyke as the gunne," cf. Wyatt, *Tottel,* p. 54 (from Serafino, see Foxwell's *Wiat,* I 51); with Turb., pp. 130–131, "Long you with greedie minde," cf. *Tottel,* p. 99.

For further information about Turbervile, see Hyder E. Rollins, *Modern Phil.,* XV, 129 ff.

[27] Barnabe Googe, *Eglogs, Epytaphes, and Sonettes,* 1563, ed. E. Arber. In the dedication (p. 25) Googe quotes Martial (I 3). One of his epigrams (p. 92) with an answer by A. Nevill, is from Ovid, *Remed. Amor.* vv. 139–140, 161–162. Other epigrams on pp. 80–81, 97.

A gorgious Gallery, of gallant Inventions, 1578, reprinted J. P. Collier, pp. 65, 83–85.

Thomas Howell, *Devises,* 1581, ed. W. Raleigh, contains many versified maxims, of which the following may be quoted to represent the type of epigram discussed in the paragraph above:

> Eche valiaunt harte and Noble minde,
> with loftie courage hye:
> The mightie Mountayne seekes to scale,
> and lets the Molehill lye. (p. 59.)

Nicholas Breton, *Works,* ed. Grosart, *Chertsey Worthies Lib., The Toyes of an Idle Head,* 1582, p. 37; *The Arbor of Amorous Devises,* 1597, pp. 13, 14.

Francis Thynne, *Emblemes and Epigrames,* presented in MS to Sir Thomas Egerton in 1600, first published in ed. of F. J. Furnivall, E. E. T. S., No. 64. There is sufficient evidence that most if not all of this work was composed before 1580; the internal evidence of style, phraseology, meter, alliteration, points to such a date. Furthermore, Thynne says (p. 2) in his dedicatory epistle to Egerton: "Some of them are composed of thinges donn and sayed by such as were well knowne to your Lordshippe, and to my self in those yonger yeares when Lincolns Inn societie did linke us all in one cheyne of Amitie;" Egerton was admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1559, Thynne in 1561, and Valence, to whom Emblem 63 is addressed, in 1560. Epig. 21 alludes to Gascoigne's *Steele Glas* (1576) as if it were recent. On the other hand, Epig. 38 contains a reference to the *Faerie Queene.*

Thynne (p. 2) refers to his "emblemes and Epigrames, what soever they be, partlie drawen out of historie, and partlie out of Phisicall Philosophie, but tending to moralitie, and perswatione to vertue." His epigrams are earnest, moral, didactic, sententious; some are not epigrams at all; some tell humorous anecdotes. With Epigs. 16, 37, cf. More, Cayley's *Memoirs,* II, 331, 325, and Kendall, *Flowers,* pp. 176, 173; with Epig. 14 cf. Heywood, *Epigs. on Proverbs,* No. 150; with Epig. 22 cf. Harington, i 74.

It is evident that the "courtly makers" and their successors had little taste for Martial. In the work of this whole school (except Kendall) there are only three pieces, all in *Tottel,* which suggest comparison with the Latin writer. One of these is Surrey's well-known translation of Martial's "Vitam quae faciunt beatiorem" (X 47):

Martiall, the thinges that do attayn
The happy life, be these, I finde.
The richesse left, not got with pain:
The frutefull ground: the quiet mynde:
The egall frend, no grudge, no strife:
No charge of rule, nor governance:
Without disease the healthfull lyfe:
The houshold of continuance:
The meane diet, no delicate fare:
Trew wisdom joyned with simplenesse:
The night discharged of all care,
Where wine the wit may not oppresse:
The faithful wife, without debate:
Suche slepes, as may begyle the night:
Contented with thine owne estate,
Ne wish for death, ne feare his might.[28]

[28] Tottel, p. 27. Also found, in a slightly different version, in a MS collection of Surrey's poems (Add. MS 36529 Brit. Mus., the "P MS" reprinted by F. M. Padelford, *Anglia,* XXIX, 297).

Also, in Fluegel's *Neueng. Lesebuch,* I, 103, is a version almost identical with that in *Tottel,* but attributed by Fluegel to William Baldwin, because it is taken from *A Treatise of Morall Phylosophye, contayning the sayinges of the wyse. Gathered and Englyshed by Wylliam Baldewyn.* (See *Camb. Hist. Eng. Lit.,* IV, 500, where the volume is listed as a translation of "Diogenes Laertius and others.")

I have not seen this work. It was first published in 1547, the year of Surrey's execution, and several times republished. It seems to be a sort of anthology, and probably not all the selections were "Englyshed" by Baldwin. At least I shall take Surrey's authorship for granted; for surely the presumption in Surrey's favor, the probability that the verses were quoted by Baldwin, rather than that they found their way from his *Treatise* into collections of Surrey's work, is strong. When the *Miscellany* was first published, 1557, Baldwin and Tottel had for some years been business associates, and Baldwin had had every opportunity to lay claim to this poem, had he written it. See *Camb. Hist. Eng. Lit.,* III, 219.

In Warton's *Hist. Eng. Poetry,* IV, 309, I find a statement that Baldwin "annexed some specimens" of Martial "to his Treatise." If so, I regret that I have not been able to see them.

I quote Surrey's lines in full, because they are apparently the first English rendering of Martial, because they are felicitous and at the same time almost literal, and because I wish later to compare them with Kendall's version of the same original. It is easy to see why Surrey, who had little in common with Martial, should have chosen this one epigram for translation. It falls in with the contemporary taste for general reflection; and it expresses that love of country simplicity as opposed to the corruption of the court which was a fashionable and no doubt sincere sentiment of the time. It also illustrates the wider range allowed the Latin epigram, for Surrey's poem could scarcely be called an English epigram. The other two epigrams in *Tottel,* both by Grimald, which have parallels in Martial, are not significant, save in so far as they may point to an acquaintance with Martial more widespread than one would have surmised.[29]

That Martial indeed was not unread at this time is amply proved by Timothy Kendall's *Flowers of Epigrammes,* 1577.[30]

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[29] *Tottel,* p. 108:

No image carved with coonnyng hand, no cloth of purple dye,
No precious weight of metall bright, no silver plate gyve I:
Such gear allures not hevenly herts: such gifts no grace they bring:
I lo, that know your mind, will send none such, what then? nothing.

Cf. Mar., V 59:

Quod non argentum, quod non tibi mittimus aurum
hoc facimus causa, Stella diserte, tua.
quisquis magna dedit, voluit sibi magna remitti;
fictilibus nostris exoneratus eris.

Again, *Tottel,* p. 115:

Why, Nicolas, why doest thou make such haste
After thy brother? Why goest thou so? To taste
Of changed lyfe with hym the better state? etc.

Cf. Mar., IX 51:

Quod semper superos invito fratre rogasti,
hoc, Lucane, tibi contigit, ante mori.
invidet ille tibi; Stygias nam Tullus ad umbras
optabat, quamvis sit minor, ire prior, etc.

The resemblance is so general that it is more probable that Grimald was following Renaissance originals than Martial. However, that there should be any resemblance shows some kinship.

[30] Reprinted Spenser Soc. *Publ.,* No. 15. An earlier edition had appeared in 1575.

This volume is divided into two sections: translations and original verses. The translations include work from thirty-five authors and from the Anthology.[31] The epigrams are grouped according to authorship, each man's productions being kept together. Kendall's favorites are Martial, from whom he gives 124 epigrams, Parkhurst, from whom he gives 87, the Greek Anthology (60), Pictorius (40), More (28), Ausonius (19), Beza (15), and Haddon (14). The others for the most part contribute only four or five apiece.

Martial's representation is most important. With one exception, all the translations from Martial seem to have been made by Kendall himself. They may be described as inaccurate and infelicitous. He has so little command over even the easy meters he uses, chiefly the fourteener, that in translating, though he alters at will, he fails to achieve English idiom and syntax. The one epigram not translated by Kendall himself is Surrey's rendering of Martial, X 47. Kendall also gives a version of his own, some lines from which I quote because they afford a comparison with Surrey and a good example of Kendall's own defects and qualities:

> The thinges whiche cause mans life·mee thinkes
> most full of blisse to be,
> Are these: when goods from frends do fall,
> and we from labour free.
> When fertill field growes fast abroad,
> and mind is voyd of strife:
> And merry Jhon by tostyng fire,
> may sit with Jone his wife.
> When corps is sound and strong with all,
> and wisedome rules the mynde:
> And frends in frendships faithfull knot,
> a faithfull hart doth bynde, etc.[32]

The concision, which Surrey happily preserves, is lacking. Kendall's lines are full of expansions, omissions, and distortions. It is typical of Kendall's work.

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[31] For Kendall's unacknowledged borrowings from Grimald and Turbervile, see above, p. 314 note 25, p. 315 note 26*a*, for various parallels between Kendall and others, see index to this study under Kendall.

[32] p. 52; see above, p. 317, for Surrey's version.

The great bulk of the epigrams chosen from Martial for translation, if we except the thirty-seven from the *Xenia* and *Apophoreta*, belong to the class of personal satire and invective. The next most numerous class is the reflective. The really poetic element in Martial, the part of his work filled with pathos and sentiment, such as some of his epitaphs, is avoided almost altogether. So likewise is the obscene, although Kendall sometimes omits the objectionable elements and substitutes an innocuity of his own.[33]

Besides the translations there are other points of contact with Martial in the book. In the introductory epistle *To the courteous and frendly Reader*, Kendall writes: "Now (courteous reader) of all sorts of Poems, and Poesies, none (mee thinketh) are more pithie and pleasant, than pretty, shorte, witty, quicke, and quippyng Epigrammes: in the which kind of writyng *Marcus Valerius Martialis* is counted cheefly to excell. Wherefore out of him (as sundrie other most singular authors) have I translated and taken sundrie short, propper, pithie and pleasant verses, and Epigrammes, for thy no little profite, and great delectation: marrie this must I let thee understand, that as well out of *Martial* as the rest, I have lefte the lewde, I have chosen the chaste": and so on.[34] These words are of some importance as being among the earliest English criticisms of Martial and

[33] I append a table of the epigrams translated:
Spec. Lib. 10, 18 (p. 20); 25b (p. 21).
I 10, 13 (p. 21); 19 (p. 24); 29, 32, 33 (p. 25); 38, 47 (p. 26); 64, 65, 72 (p. 22); 91, 97, 98 (p. 23); 103 (p. 24).
II 7 (p. 28); 12, 16 (p. 29).
III 26 (p. 36); 31, 32, 35 (p. 37); 44 (p. 38); 45 (p. 39); 79, 80 (p. 30).
IV 5 (p. 30); 20 (p. 31); 36, 49 (p. 26); 51, 56 (p. 27); 65 (p. 28).
V 13 (p. 32); 17, 18 (p. 33); 28, 29 (p. 34); 42, 52 (p. 35); 49 (p. 39); 76 (p. 32); 81 (p. 39).
VI 51, 53 (p. 40); 57, 61 (p. 41); 63, 72, 79 (p. 42); 82, 92 (p. 43).
VII 10 (p. 44); 98 (p. 45).
VIII 3 (p. 45); 12, 35, 43 (p. 47).
IX 25 (p. 50); 48 (p. 47); 77 (p. 48); 82, 92 (p. 49).
X 14 (p. 51); 22 (p. 55); 43, 47 (p. 52); 65 (p. 53); 82 (p. 54).
XI 56 (p. 55); 66 (p. 57); 86 (p. 56); 89, 92 (p. 57).
XII 10 (p. 57); 20, 25, 34 (p. 58); 45, 47, 54, 56 (p. 59).
The *Xenia* and *Apophoreta* I have not tabulated.
One supposititious epigram, p. 31.

[34] p. 9.

the epigram. They show unmistakably that Martial was then recognized by many as the epigrammatist *par excellence*, and that the main qualities of the epigram were already becoming fixed. In some verses "to the Reader" Kendall throws further light on contemporary opinion of Martial:

> *Martial* is muche mislikt, and lothde,
> of modest mynded men:
> For leude lascivious wanton woorks,
> and woords whiche he doeth pen.[35]

The two opinions are not inconsistent, and may help to explain why neither Martial nor the epigram was popular at the time, since the greatest composer of epigrams was looked at askance. Another point of contact between the *Flowers* and Martial is in the work translated from some of the humanists, such as Politian, Beza, Muret, who were influenced by Martial. When such influence was mainly stylistic, it does not penetrate through the dense medium of Kendall's rendering; but when, as in Parkhurst's epigrams, the imitation was of substance as well as style, we can trace the various pieces to their source.[36] Kendall's own "trifles," in spite of the author's evident knowledge and admiration of Martial, with one exception show no imitation of him.[37] In fine, the *Flowers of Epigrammes* proves to us that Martial, in spite of the adverse forces of moral objection and medieval and Renaissance literary taste, was making some headway in England. Kendall at least introduced into English the matter of a large number of Martial's epigrams. Unfortunately, Kendall's admiration was defeated by his inepti-

[35] p. 19.

[36] Those of Parkhurst's epigrams translated by Kendall which are imitated from Martial are the following:

p. 203, To Torpetus	Mar. X 91.
p. 207, Of Lollus and Caeciliana	VIII 35.
p. 223, Of Antonina	IV 87.
p. 224, To Hermannus Mennus	V 81.
p. 235–236, To the Reader	VII 81, IV 89.
p. 235, To Leopoldus	III 61.

[37] The exception is *To one of a divers and straunge nature*, p. 251, in which Martial's couplet XII 45 has been expanded to six fourteeners. Kendall's verses are probably derived from a neo-Latin imitation of Martial's epigram.

tude as translator; and his work serves chiefly to emphasize the distance which separated him from his model.

The rest of the *Flowers* helps point this dissimilarity. While the extraordinarily large selection from Martial and Parkhurst indicates that Kendall most admired the classical Latin type of epigram, his taste was nothing if not catholic. In consequence his work is a sort of compendium of all the elements which we noted as going to make up the epigram of the Renaissance.[38] The Anthology and Ausonius are well represented; there is no lack of those epigrams which derive their tone and material from the Middle Ages; many likewise are typical Renaissance love-poems, treating the subject in the Italian or Petrarcan fashion, as it is treated in *Tottel's Miscellany,* and showing how widely this fashion had spread among the neo-Latin epigrammatists. Furthermore, Kendall has availed himself, always without acknowledgment, of previous translations by Surrey, Grimald, and Turbervile. In the selection of the "Epigrammes out of Greek," from Ausonius, and from many of the Renaissance writers, Kendall shows the same preferences as Turbervile. He includes more didactic, gnomic, and reflective verse than any other sort. His selection contains many epigrams which tell anecdotes, both instructive and humorous. There is some satire of the type of direct personal abuse and invective.

On the other hand, a large part of the contents calls to mind rather the Middle Ages and the Reformation than the Anthology and the Renaissance. Especially extensive is the use of religious, theological, and ecclesiastical themes. The Protestant bias is marked; the attacks on popes, priests, monks, and other ecclesiastics are numerous. Moral fervor is a frequent inspiration. Gluttony, pride, avarice, the sinfulness of the world, the pains of hell, and the corresponding virtues and joys, are favorite themes. There is satire against women in general; and there are the funny stories reminiscent rather of the jestbooks than of the Anthology. Kendall's own efforts likewise belong chiefly to the medieval school. They abound in aphorisms, and are

[38] See above, pp. 300–302.

sententious and moralistic. He is fierce against women and against the Roman Church. In his use of proverbial material, he sometimes reminds the reader of Heywood.[39] In the gathering of his anthology, he overlooked little; whatever may be his shortcomings, he deserves the credit of having achieved an inclusive résumé of the epigram at that time.

The publication of the *Flowers of Epigrammes* ends the first period in the history of the English epigram. The species ceases to be cultivated for fifteen years, and when it begins again, it is under new auspices and in a new manner. In the first section of this chapter we discussed the relation of Martial to the popular epigram, comprised in the work of Crowley and Heywood. In the present section we have been dealing with epigrams addressed to a select audience, by men who felt to the full the new impact of the Renaissance, yet in whom the Middle Ages were still operative. Naturally, inevitably, the authors of the period combined the two points of view, the medieval and the Renaissance; and neither was favorable to Martial. His 'lewdness,' lightness, easy-going tolerance, were opposed to that moral earnestness which was supposed to be the duty of poetry when poetry was required to teach moral lessons; his indifference to love repulsed men whose chief admiration was given to Italian verse; he was neither improving nor romantic. His literary skill they might have admired, but could not imitate.

On the other hand, the Greek Anthology was admirably suited, with its gnomic verses and its love-poems, to their taste; and the neo-Latin epigram, whether following the Greek or drawing its matter and spirit from the Middle Ages, was a product of the same mental condition as their own. Furthermore, when we read the lyrics of the 'new poetry,' with their prolixity and their extravagance, their triteness and commonplaces, their experimental efforts, in which the effort is so

[39] e.g., p. 283:

An Hunters breakfast cheefest is,
a Lawiers dinner best:
Monkes drinkyngs, Marchaunts suppers fine
surmount and passe the rest.

generally more praiseworthy than the achievement, we cannot wonder that Martial was not influential: we wonder rather that epigrams were attempted at all, and we understand why so few were not failures. However, in the contributors to *Tottel* and their followers, we can trace the feeble beginnings, under adverse circumstances, of a tradition of the epigram not without possibilities. These possibilities were destined not to be realized. The spirit of the chief Elizabethans was not friendly to the epigram.

3. Elizabethan Poetry and the Epigram

A year after Kendall's *Flowers of Epigrammes,* Lyly's *Euphues* was published; another year and the *Shepheards Calender* appeared. The opening years of the next decade were marked by the composition of the *Arcadia* and *Astrophel and Stella.* The Elizabethan age was at its height, and the epigram was forgotten. Yet the fifteen years after Kendall, when the epigram ceased altogether, are of extreme importance in the history of the *genre,* for the reason that the reaction against this period first brought the epigram truly into fashion. The salient features of the time are sufficiently indicated by the four titles which begin this paragraph. The age, in its literary taste, was at the very antipodes from Martial; imaginative and idealistic, living on high emotional levels, usually extravagant and often fantastic, not seldom unreal, artificial and inflated, it would have none of his realistic and cynical spirit, of his commonplace and often repulsive subject-matter, or of his terse and polished style, rhetorical but unpoetical. It is easy to see why Martial was not popular; and it is not difficult to see why the epigram as a form was neglected. The epithet applied with most frequency to the Elizabethan age is "expansive," and the epigram lends itself ill to "expansion." Less restrictive forms offered a medium of expression more suited to the temper of the times. The impulse was essentially lyrical, and found an outlet in the pastoral, the sonnet, the madrigal, and the song and 'air.'

Even so, the epigram was not entirely unknown in the "spacious age." Spenser himself published three Anacreontic epigrams, each of which tells a fanciful little incident of Cupid.[40] And the courtly poets, such as Oxford, Dyer, Greville, Sidney, Ralegh, Essex, often wrote in a sententious strain which has led some people to term their work 'epigrammatic.' The epithet is applicable only in its looser modern sense; they produced few epigrams, as we are using the word. These few are almost all of the reflective type, as a rule melancholy in tone, in praise of solitude, poverty, peace, and the like.[41] Ralegh's are of the highest quality; he has the pointed brevity, the condensation, the inscriptional quality, the seriousness and passion, which make a poem of an epigram.[42]

Another epigrammatic strain is found in the madrigal in its later development. It tended more and more in form toward the epigram, and came often to borrow its material from epigrammatic literature, especially from the Greek Anthology and imitations of it. Davison's *Poetical Rhapsody* contains two epigram-madrigals derived indirectly from the Anthology and illustrative of this tendency.[43] The union of the madrigal and

[40] For these, and for the six so-called epigrams which appeared in Van der Noodt's *Theatre for Worldlings,* 1569, see the following: Lee, *Eliz. Sonnets* in *English Garner,* I, xxxvi, xcii; R. E. Neil Dodge, ed., *Cambridge Spenser,* pp. 717, 764; E. de Sélincourt, ed., *Spenser's Minor Poems,* pp. xxvii, 417 ff, 484 ff.

[41] A good example is the Earl of Oxford's epigram debating the charms of "a kingdom, or a cottage, or a grave," with its three answers; or Essex's "Happy were he could finish forth his fate": J. Hannah's *Poems of Raleigh, Wotton,* etc., Aldine ed., pp. 147, 177.

[42] See *To his Son, On the Cards and Dice,* "What is our life? The play of passion," "Even such is time, that takes in trust"; Hannah, *op. cit.,* pp. 18, 19, 29, 54, 56, for Ralegh's epigrams.

[43] Ed. A. H. Bullen, I, 139 and note: *Inscription for the Statue of Dido,* by F. Davison, from a madrigal by Guarini after an epigram by Ausonius; and I, 89, No. 2 and note, a madrigal from Buchanan's Latin epigram (Lib. I, Epig. 30) after a Greek epigram.

As an instance of how epigrammatic in form the madrigal became without borrowing from any epigram I quote the following:

> Crowned with flowers I saw fair Amaryllis
> By Thyrsis sit, hard by a fount of crystal;
> And with her hand, more white than snow or lilies,
> On sand she wrote, "My faith shall be immortal";
> And suddenly a storm of wind and weather
> Blew all her faith and sand away together:

quoted from Schelling, *Eliz. Lyrics,* p. 155; found in Byrd's *Psalms, Songs, and Sonnets,* 1611.

the epigram reached its completion in the work of Drummond of Hawthornden, who, though later than the period we are discussing, is recognized as essentially an Elizabethan. One section of his *Poems,* 1616, is headed *Madrigalls and Epigrammes;* and it is evident, since there is no way of telling which the author regarded as which, that to him the two forms were indistinguishable. Many of his epigram-madrigals are not only epigrammatic in form, but are derived, directly or indirectly, from epigrammatic literature.[44] By Drummond's time, indeed, the madrigal had practically taken over one line of descent, one species, of the epigram, that, namely, which originated in the more poetic pieces of the Anthology and came down through the work of Ausonius and the earlier Renaissance Latinists. One reason for this phenomenon lies in the fact that by that time the epigram proper had become so strictly associated with the prosaic themes and realistic treatment, as we shall see, of social satire, vulgar humor, and personal abuse, that one entire branch, and that the most beautiful, of the epigram was cut off from it. But this higher type, instead of ceasing to affect English poetry, became incorporated in the English madrigal.

In general, then, the great age of Elizabethan poetry was not favorable to the epigram, if we take as the 'great age' what were certainly the most typical years of the Queen's reign, namely, those that separate the *Shepheards Calender* from the second appearance of the *Faerie Queen.* This period, however, contained within itself the seeds of an inevitable reaction; and it is with that reaction that we have now to deal.

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[44] See Drummond's *Poetical Works,* ed. L. E. Kastner, text I, 99–135, notes I, 226–242. Most of the verses in question had already appeared in the 1614? ed.; see variant readings, *loc. cit.* The following are derived from epigrams: No. 1, from Tebaldeo; No. 28, from Panigarola; No. 51, from Volpi; No. 62, from Zanchi; No. 42, from Tabourot; No. 40, from Ronsard, ultimately from the Greek. Nos. 6 and 7 of the posthumous poems (*Kastner,* II, 176) may be either from madrigals by Mauritio Moro or from Latin epigrams by Alciati and Sannazaro.

CHAPTER III

THE EPIGRAM FROM 1590 TO 1600

1. The Anti-Elizabethan Reaction

The decade from 1590 to 1600 is of unusual interest and importance in literary history, for the reason that in those years there came suddenly to life a vigorous reaction against the kind of literature which had dominated the 1580's, a reaction in which the most eminent figures were Donne and Jonson, but which was far too general to have been the work of any two men. This reaction marked a cardinal point in the history of English literature. On one side, under Donne's auspices, it anticipated the coming of the metaphysical school;[1] on the other, under Jonson's, the beginnings of the so-called classical school which ran through the seventeenth century and dominated the eighteenth. Not poetry only, but all forms of literature were affected. The remote and often insubstantial imaginings of the mid-Elizabethans, with their prolixity and their profusion of decorative ornament, were replaced by realism satirical and critical, by intellectual and ingenious compression of style, by sanity and common sense. Men of letters returned from the airy domains of fancy to earth and common day; and what they found did not please them.

[1] F. E. Schelling (*Eliz. Lyrics,* p. xxi) complains of those "who still persist with Dr. Johnson in regarding this great poet [Donne] as the founder of a certain 'Metaphysical School of Poetry.'" I believe, however, that Schelling means only to emphasize the point that Donne in his own day stood alone, that his followers belong to a later generation, and that therefore Donne cannot be held to have aimed consciously at the founding of a new school—in all which respects, of course, Donne differs from Ben Jonson. That Donne, nevertheless, was one of the two men who exerted most influence on the lyric of the seventeenth century, no one surely would deny.

This change is obvious in prose literature. The typical prose product of the eighties had been the courtly pastoral romance, which continued into the nineties but no longer held the field. The later decade is signalized by the appearance of realistic and picaresque fiction, in the work of Greene, Nashe, and Deloney. A similar phenomenon is the popularity of what may be termed the literature of repentance, of which Greene was the most eminent and voluminous producer. The advent of the new spirit is clearly marked in his work: his *Menaphon,* 1589, was followed in the next year by his *Mourning Garment* and *Never too Late.* Still another sign of the times is the large growth of social satire in prose. This form, to be sure, had never altogether died out; Gosson and Stubbes were writing in the seventies and eighties, and Lodge's *Alarum against Usurers* appeared in 1584. But the writings of Chettle, Greene, and Nashe in the nineties, and later of Dekker and others, evince a new and widespread taste for productions of this sort. Another witness to the new taste is the outbreak of acrid controversies and "Flytings," political, literary, personal, of which the Marprelate quarrel and the Harvey-Nashe affair offer examples. A little later the spirit which caused the reaction manifested itself, in different mold and on a different literary level, in collections of essays and characters.

In the drama the reaction is somewhat less marked and comes a little later than in the other literary forms, perhaps because producers and managers are always inclined to cling conservatively to what they know the public likes. However, the ten years in question saw a marked change on the stage: from the high romance of Marlowe, Peele, and Greene, to the realism and the satire of Jonson, Chapman, and Marston. Between 1590 and 1600 lie the beginnings of the vogue of such domestic comedies as Dekker's *Shoemakers' Holiday* (1599), of such domestic tragedies as *Arden of Feversham* (before 1592), of the comedy of humors, *Every Man in his Humour* belonging to 1598. The plays connected with the "war of the theatres," 1598–1602, naturally contained a large satirical element. The stage was

by no means immune from the new spirit. Shakespeare's relation to the anti-Elizabethan reaction is a fascinating subject, but one upon which, unfortunately, I can scarcely touch here. In Jaques of *As You Like It,* he ridicules the mood of the reaction, but in 1600 he himself fell under its sway and turned to the composition of tragedies and bitter comedies. No better illustration of the change could be found than the difference between *Tamburlaine* with its literally unbounded gusto for life, and *King Lear* with its detestable world of horror. But above all, to any one who would understand the spirit of 1600, a careful study of *Hamlet* is to be recommended; there is to be found the most masterly interpretation of that depression and disgust—especially self-disgust—that united loathing of rottenness and fascination with it, that exacerbation and torment of self and others—which were so characteristic of the time. To many Englishmen "this goodly frame, the earth," had come to seem "a sterile promontory."[2]

As for non-dramatic poetry, the earlier years of the decade marked the heyday of the sonnet and the close of the pastoral fashion. Other highly favored Elizabethan forms had been the the romance and the romantic allegory, the elegy, and the erotic narrative poem such as *Venus and Adonis.* Against what seemed to them the inflation, the unreality, and the lack of sincerity in this verse, men now protested. Donne began to produce lyrics which gave the effect of actuality by the forcefulness of a style intense, contracted, and highly intellectualized. Jonson began to inculcate the virtues of sanity and lucidity, restraint and finish. But there was no more striking and significant phenomenon in the world of letters than the sudden appearance and popularity of the classical satire, modeled on Juvenal and Persius, and the classical epigram, modeled on Martial. In this decade collections of epigrams were published or at least written by Sir John Davies, Sir John Harington, Edward Guilpin, Thomas Bastard, and John Weever; while

[2] On the drama, see Schelling, *Eliz. Drama,* especially chaps. 7, 10, 11. For Marston's relation to the reaction see M. S. Allen, *The Satire of John Marston,* especially pp. 115 ff., 143 ff., 158 ff.

satires were produced by Donne, Lodge, Hall, Marston, Guilpin, and others of less note. It is interesting to note, as showing the close kinship between the two species, that not only do they flourish simultaneously, but that they had ceased to be written during precisely the same period, the satire having disappeared (except for Spenser's *Mother Hubberds Tale*) in the period between Gascoigne, 1576, and Donne 1593?.[3]

There is no lack of evidence that the reaction on the part of the satirists and epigrammatists was wholly conscious and intentional. Hall devotes the whole first book of the *Virgidemiae* to ridicule of contemporary poetry, with its high-soaring flights, its artificiality and unreality; he lampoons in turn heroic romance and romantic allegory, the pastoral, the extravagant sonnet, bombastic tragedy, and "lustful poetry," meaning apparently such works as *Hero and Leander* and *Venus and Adonis*.[4] Guilpin puts the matter plainly:

> Hence with these fidlers whose oyle buttred lines
> Are panders unto lusts and food to sinnes!
> Their whimpring sonnets, puling elegies,
> Slaunder the Muses, make the world despise
> Admired poesie, marre resolutions ruffe,
> And melt true valour with lewd ballad stuffe. . . .
> The Satyre onely and Epigramatist
> (Concisde Epigrame, and sharpe Satyrist)
> Keepe diet from this surfet of excesse,
> Tempring themselves from such licenciousnes.[5]

Sir John Davies ridicules the fashion of sonneteering in his *Gulling Sonnets:*

> Your judgement see with pitty, and with scorne
> The bastard Sonnetts of these Rymers bace,
> Which in this whiskinge age are daily borne
> To their own shames, and Poetrie's disgrace.[6]

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[3] On the whole subject of satire, see R. M. Alden, *The Rise of Formal Satire in England,* Univ. of Penn. Publ., VII, No. 2.

[4] Hall's *Satires,* ed. S. W. Singer, pp. 1–24; see also *A Defiance to Envy,* p. xcix.

[5] *Skialethcia,* reprinted by J. P. Collier; pp. 24–27, from *Satyre Preludium,* which is all in a like strain.

[6] *Complete Poems,* ed. Grosart, 1876, II, 55.

Sir John Harington expresses the same opinion:

> Once, by mishap, two Poets fell a squaring,
> The Sonnet and our Epigram comparing;
> And *Faustus* having long demur'd upon it,
> Yet at the last gave sentence for the Sonnet.
> Now, for such censure, this chiefe defence is,
> Their sugred tast best like his likresse senses.
> Well, though I grant Sugar may please the tast,
> Yet let my verse have salt to make it last.[7]

To account for this sudden change which swept over England at the close of Queen Elizabeth's reign is no easy matter; at present it is probably impossible. But one thing is certain: it was no mere shift of literary whim or fashion. Its causes lie deep in the experience of the English people—experience political, religious, economic, social, spiritual, and intellectual.[8] We may, however, be able to discern some of the causes which are particularly related to the epigram and thus to shed some light on the subject.

The year of the Spanish Armada marks a turning point in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. From 1588 on, the opposition between the government and Parliament grew more intense, until finally in 1601 the Queen was forced to capitulate to the dissatisfaction of the people. During this period, in the words of A. F. Pollard,[9] Elizabeth "loses touch with her people; Crown and Parliament come into sharper conflict; the breach with puritan-

[7] Book I, Epig. 37, 1633 ed. On contemporary ridicule of the sonnet, see *Camb. Hist. Eng. Lit.*, III, 305.

[8] Harold V. Routh's remarks are good, so far as they go: "By the beginning of the seventeenth century, a sense of disillusionment was pervading the nation, caused, partly, by the corruption of the governing classes, and, even more, by the bitter social and religious antagonisms among the people themselves. They began to lose faith in high ideals and heroic sentiments, and, as the passions and deeds of men lost their hold on the imagination, the petty curiosities and materialised interests, inseparable from city life, came out of the shadow." *Camb. Hist. Eng. Lit.*, IV, 381.

Routh also (*ibid.*, p. 370) discusses the "conflict between the traditions of medieval Christianity and the Graeco-Oriental morality advocated by the classics of the silver age."

See also his account of the effect of the growth of London and of wealth, p. 362.

[9] *Polit. Hist. of England*, VI, 458.

ism widens; there is even a rebellion in London, and Protestants look forward to a change of sovereign.'' The Marprelate tracts give one sign of the religious difficulties, which, however, had to do with papists as well as puritans. The political and religious conflicts of the time may have little directly to do with the literary reaction; but the fact that there was trouble in the air no doubt intensified the feeling that the world was not as it should be.

More powerful in rousing this feeling were the social and economic forces. These may be grouped under the headings of two of their main results: the growth of London and the rise in prices. The population of London increased with great rapidity during our period;[10] the population in 1580 has been estimated at about 123,000, at 152,478 for 1593–95, and at 224,275 for 1605. This tremendous growth was the result of many causes. For one thing, after the fall of Antwerp in 1576, London began to assume her position as the center of the world's trade, and an era of immense commercial prosperity set in. The mercantile classes were much more thriving than the agricultural; and the inevitable result was that a human tide flowed into the capital. Furthermore, with the highly centralized government set up by the Tudors, the Court had assumed a new importance. Attached to it were the great households of the eminent noblemen. London became the place where advancement and wealth were to be won; and young men flocked thither to make their fortunes. They entered the Inns of Court; they attached themselves to the Court in various capacities, or entered the military service of the nation. This class of young men about town is of extreme importance in the history of literature; they became the supporters and patrons of letters, the subject of much writing, and often authors in their own right. They are the ''gallants'' and the ''gulls'' of whom we hear so much; and most of the authors of satires and epigrams—Donne, Hall, Davies, Harington—belonged in their younger years to this class. There was an

[10] *Social England*, ed. Traill, III, 373; Creighton, M.: *Blackwood's Magazine*, CXLIX, 477 ff.

enormous increase in wealth among merchants and courtiers; but an even greater increase in expenditures, beyond what most men could afford. This extravagance was in part due to the temper of the age, but even more, probably, to the fact, that, lacking other opportunities of investment, men invested their newly acquired riches in personal effects. "Their wealth was converted into gold plate, jewellery, and rich apparel, till London became the city of fantastic costumes and extravagant ostentation."[11] A natural accompaniment of this state of affairs was extravagance in conduct, of which the contemporary social literature gives us many vivid pictures. And so conditions were ripe for satire; after an unprecedented influx of wealth, the town was full of *nouveaux riches,* of persons whose standards in other matters had not risen so rapidly as their financial resources; vice was flourishing, and to many sober observers the age seemed to have cast off the last restraint.

We hear little of the other side of the picture; but that there was another side we have evidence enough. During this period of prosperity the cost of living had soared; prices had at least quadrupled during the century.[12] Partial causes for this phenomenon were the large increase in the amount of gold and silver in circulation, due to the spoliation of America, and the monopolies on the necessities of life—e.g., salt and steel—granted to courtiers and favorites. No doubt also the influx of wealth from foreign commerce is partly responsible. It is significant that in the decade of special interest to us there was another reason for the dearness of grain; the five years 1594–1598 inclusive were times of scarcity, 1597 being a "veritable famine," when the price of grain reached a point not equalled for a half-century afterward.[13] This increase in the cost of

[11] H. V. Routh, *Camb. Hist. Eng. Lit.,* IV, 362.

[12] E. P. Cheyney, *Industrial and Social History of England,* p. 171. Thorold Rogers (*Six Centuries of Work and Wages,* p. 388) estimates that the price of grain had increased from five to seven fold during the century. For great increases due to monopolies, see Pollard, *op. cit.,* p. 474; W. Cunningham, *Growth of English Industry and Commerce,* II, i, 58–77.

[13] J. E. T. Rogers, *Six Centuries,* p. 388.

living naturally caused hardship to many classes of the population. The rural classes, whether landowners or laborers, did not share to the full in the prosperity; fixed incomes did not keep pace with prices, nor did wages. It has even been estimated that prices rose eight to fifteen times as rapidly as wages.[14] The process inevitably resulted in evil social conditions, which called forth a body of social legislation at the end of Elizabeth's reign, in 1597 and 1601. Laws were passed to check enclosures and to remedy the decay of husbandry and tillage, to create a system of poor relief, and to deal with the problem of vagabondage.[15] Because we hear comparatively little of these troubles in contemporary verse, we must not suppose that they had little effect in increasing the bitterness and irritation generally expressed. The very contrast with the obvious luxury of the wealthy would strengthen the sense that the world was out of joint.

All these factors, political and economic, fail, however, fully to account for the tone of the reaction. In some of the satirical writing then produced there is an acerbity and an exasperation, a morbid delight in filth and nastiness which makes one think of the dog returning to his vomit—one aspect of Hamlet's spiritual condition. The causes of this spiritual state lie too deep in human nature and human experience for me to hope to account for them; I can only suggest a line of explanation. The difficulties of the early seventeenth century must be entered on the debit side in casting the account of the Renaissance. The Elizabethan era, it is commonly and truly said, was an "age of expansion"; we must not forget that many of its expandings were at great cost, and that the seventeenth century had to pay the bill. The conflict of medieval Christianity with neo-paganism is not by itself a sufficient explanation, though it contains a truth. The mental furniture of the period was indeed unharmonious and incongruous, when Platonic philosophy, Aristotelian ethics, and Christian religion, not to speak of sheer

[14] J. E. Symes, in *Social England*, III, 545.

[15] Pollard, *op. cit.*, p. 469.

hedonism, had to abide together unreconciled in a single mind. We need not wonder that the inner conflict led to the unhappiness, melancholy, and sudden conversions experienced by the finer spirits of the Renaissance from Petrarch at the start to John Donne at the end. The only way to escape this conflict was to yield oneself without reflection and without regret, as Marlowe seems to have done, to the outward impulses of the time.

For the tendency of the Renaissance was outward, not inward. It failed to keep proportion between the outer and the inner life. Its self-development, so lauded by its admirers, was one-sided; and perhaps the side on which it was weaker is the more essential of the two. Probably in *Il Cortegiano* is found as good an expression as any of the Elizabethan ideal, an ideal high enough and difficult enough, to be sure, but bound to prove unsatisfactory. It is the ideal of the "complete man" and is to be attained by the gradual acquisition of all the virtues and accomplishments. It could not yield satisfaction or peace because it lacks the inner unity which results only from the domination of character by one ruling aim or desire that can magnetize and focus a man's whole nature. It made of character not an organic growth but a conscious construction; and conduct and action it tried to regulate and govern by external standards, not concerning itself with the wellspring whence flow the impulses that lead to action. Or if there was a single dominant passion, it too was directed outward; it aimed at self-development, not in the sense of a strengthening of the inner forces which may be made powerful enough to correlate and unify man's desires and faculties, but at self-development in the sense of a complete culture, a development of all the faculties each for its own sake. And lacking other criteria and rewards, it too often sought for satisfaction in the opinion of others, in fame and reputation, or in mere sense of power. This ambition was essentially egoistic and self-seeking, and even when attained failed not seldom to yield happiness or content.

The objective and outward tendency of the century was fostered by circumstances. The increase in wealth gave it material means and opened to it many opportunities, in the way of education, travel, the gratification of artistic taste, and the like. The removal of medieval religious checks and inhibitions allowed it free play. The majority, who took little thought of ideals, must have been more affected by these than by any other conditions. They had Renaissance tastes, they had the means to gratify them, and nothing held them back. "Expansion" with them must have meant chiefly obeying their impulses and doing as they pleased. No doubt in this fashion, as we are often assured was the case, all their traits and abilities were brought into play and highly developed; but the spectators, as they have left unequivocal record, often failed to find the unimpeded exhibition of human nature a lovely spectacle. The modern advocates of unhindered development of personality who have made a cult of the Renaissance would do well to read some of the literature which was called forth at its close, even the obscure productions of the satirists and epigrammatists. Only the failure of the Renaissance can explain what followed.[16]

[16] A parallel passage from Alden's *Rise of Formal Satire* (p. 229) may be quoted: "There is abundant evidence in Elizabethan literature, particularly in the drama, of laxity of morals such as one associates unwillingly with a period of such splendor. This is of course to be attributed not, as in the Rome of Juvenal, to the rottenness of decadent society, but to the lusty exuberance of life at the end of the sixteenth century. The treasures of antiquity had been spread open before the western world; the treasures of new and unconquered worlds further west had been added to these; and the restrictions of a paternalistic religion had been removed by the throwing off of the yoke of Rome. It was inevitable that there should come a new sense of fullness of life and liberty of action which, in spite of its blessings, should show between its rising waves dark abysses into which one does not like to look too long. Independence and intensity of life mark Elizabethan England in both her virtues and her vices."

As to the phenomena I fully agree, but I cannot accept Alden's explanation. It is really a question of phraseology: What he terms "lusty exuberance" and "independence and intensity of life" signifies to me simply that in that period more than at other times men of unusual capacity and force—and ordinary men as well—did just as they pleased. Whenever men abandon themselves to their emotions and impulses, one fancies things are likely to get lively. I find further that the Elizabethans themselves derived from their way of life little ultimate satisfaction, and that the emotional and spiritual exhaustion which followed the collapse of the Renaissance was an inevitable nemesis on their "liberty."

We find, then, at the end of the sixteenth century, two at least of the conditions which we laid down as necessary to a general appreciation and imitation of Martial. We find a time of disillusionment and skepticism, sophisticated and cynical, such a one as, having lost faith in all save the concrete and the obvious, holds up realism as the end of art. The men of those days were prepared to sympathize with Martial's spirit; and because of the growth of London and of luxury—and perhaps also of poverty—they were ready to take an interest in his subject-matter. In particular, among the young men connected with the Court and the Inns of Court were to be found conditions most favorable to the epigram of social satire. These men formed a sort of clique or coterie; they were interested in letters, both as critics and as writers, clever young men of taste and talent; and their own lives furnished them with the most admirable material. The time was ripe for the imitation of Martial; the success of that imitation, of course, would depend on the ability of the English epigrammatists to perceive and to appropriate Martial's literary art—and on that point we must defer judgment until we have examined the epigrams composed between 1590 and 1600.

2. Sir John Davies

Sir John Davies was born in 1569, was educated at Winchester and Oxford, and entered the Middle Temple in 1588. That he fully shared the life of the young literary gallants of the time his epigrams alone would prove, even if we did not know the story of his expulsion for cudgeling a fellow-student, which resulted in his retiring to Oxford and writing his best known poem, *Nosce Teipsum.* The date of publication of his epigrams is uncertain. They appeared in the same volume with Marlowe's translation of Ovid's *Amores,* according to the title-page at "Middleborough," though it is thought that the book

was really published in London. The probable date is 1593–94.[17] The limits of composition are indicated as 1591 and 1596 by an allusion in Epigram 48 to Harington's translation of Ariosto, published in 1591, and by an allusion in Harington's *Metamorphosis of Ajax,* 1596, to Davies' Epigram 29.[18]

With Davies the English epigram comes into its own—not that it reaches the first rank of excellence or that its literary form is fully developed, but that under his hand it assumes its prevailing character as a medium of social satire. His material he draws from the ordinary London life of his day, the life of the fops and gallants with whom he associated. He talks of dicing, haberdashery, tobacco, play-houses, prostitutes, "gulls," bear-pits, contemporary poets, Banks's horse, and what not. The spectacle of this life fills him with amusement, not with moral indignation, and he treats it lightly with wit and humor, with satire and sarcasm, not with downright invective. Except for the Latin names, he has made his work thoroughly English. That is, he has learned from Martial how to treat London as Martial treated Rome.

Of Davies' method of imitating Martial and adapting him to his own environment I quote the following as examples:

In Brunum, Epigram 32

Brunus, which deems himself a faire sweet youth,
Is thirty nine yeares of age at least;
Yet was he never, to confesse the truth,
But a dry starveling when he was at best:
This gull was sicke to shew his night-cap fine,
And his wrought pillow over-spread with lawne;
But hath been well since his griefe's cause hath line
At Trollup's by Saint Clement's Church, in pawne.

[17] I have used Davies' *Complete Poems,* ed. Grosart, 2 vols., 1876. The epigrams are included in Dyce's ed. of Marlowe, 1858. The date of the *Elegies and Epigrams* is given in *Camb. Hist. Eng. Lit.,* IV, 588, as 1590; by Sir Sidney Lee, article "Marlowe" in *D. N. B.,* as *ca.* 1597; by A. H. Bullen, article "Davies" in *D. N. B.,* as *ca.* 1593. See last cited article for Davies's life; also Grosart's biography in Fuller Worthies Library.

[18] Chiswick reprint of *Mctam. of Ajax,* 1814, p. 42. See Dyce's *Marlowe,* pp. 364, 359; Grosart's *Davies,* 1876, II, 44–45, 29.

Martial, II 16

Zoilus aegrotat: faciunt hanc stragula febrem.
si fuerit sanus, coccina quid facient?
quid torus a Nilo, quid Sidone tinctus olenti?
ostendit stultas quid nisi morbus opes?
Quid tibi cum medicis? dimitte Machaonas omnis.
vis fieri sanus? stragula sume mea.

Davies' description of a "gull" in his second epigram is an obvious imitation of Martial's account of a "bellus homo":

Of a Gull, Epigram 2

Oft in my laughing rimes, I name a Gull:
But this new terme will many questions breed;
Therefore at first I will expresse at full,
Who is a true and perfect Gull indeed:
A Gull is he who feares a velvet gowne,
And, when a wench is brave, dares not speak to her; . . .
A gull is he which weares good handsome cloaths,
And stands, in Presence, stroaking up his haire,
And fills up his unperfect speech with oaths,
But speaks not one wise word throughout the yeare:
But to define a Gull in termes precise,—
A Gull is he which seemes, and is not wise.

Martial, III 63

Cotile, bellus homo es: dicunt hoc, Cotile, multi.
audio: sed quid sit, dic mihi, bellus homo?
'Bellus homo est, flexos qui digerit ordine crines,
balsama qui semper, cinnama semper olet; . . .
Quid narras? hoc est, hoc est, homo, Cotile, bellus?
res pertricosa est, Cotile, bellus homo.

An interesting illustration of how English Davies is and yet how like Martial is the following:

In Ciprum, Epigram 22

The fine youth Ciprius is more tierse and neate,
Then the new garden of the Old Temple is;
And still the newest fashion he doth get,
And with the time doth change from that to this;
He weares a hat of the flat-crowne block,
The treble ruffes, long cloake, and doublet French;
He takes tobacco, and doth weare a lock,
And wastes more time in dressing then a wench:
Yet this new fangled youth, made for these times,
Doth above all praise old George Gascoine's rimes.[19]

[19] Compare Martial XI 90, on an admirer of Ennius; also Martial III 63.

Martial II 29

Rufe, vides illum subsellia prima terentem,
cuius et hinc lucet sardonychata manus
quaeque Tyron totiens epotavere lacernae
et toga non tactas vincere iussa nives,
cuius olet toto pinguis coma Marcelliano
et splendent volso bracchia trita pilo,
non hesterna sedet lunata lingula planta,
coccina non laesum pingit aluta pedem, etc.

A striking instance of the method of adaptation is to be found in the comparison of a single verse of Davies' with one of Martial's: "Bankes his horse is better knowne then he," Epigram 48, and "Non sum Andraemone notior caballo," X 9.

On the other hand, more often than he borrows from Martial, or imitates him or adapts from him, Davies applies Martial's treatment to matter of his own experience. As instances showing how thoroughly Davies has adopted Martial's point of view, take the following:

In Titum, Epigram 6

Titus, the brave and valorous young gallant,
Three yeares together in this town hath beene;
Yet my Lord Chancellor's tombe he hath not seene
Nor the new water-worke, nor the Elephant.
I cannot tell the cause without a smile—
He hath beene in the Counter all this while.

In Flaccum, Epigram 18

The false knave Flaccus once a bribe I gave:
The more foole I to bribe so false a knave:
But he gave back my bribe; the more foole he,
That for my folly did not cousen me.

There is nothing in Martial that can be pointed out as a source for these; they show merely how well Davies had learned his lesson.[20]

[20] I append a table of additional parallels:

Davies		Martial	Davies		Martial
1, v. 1	:	II 22, III 4	1, vv. 2, 3	:	II 8
1, v. 7	:	IV 49	1, vv. 13, 14	:	X 33
11	:	II 41	22	:	II 29
23	:	III 95	26	:	IX 37
28	:	XII 17	34	:	IX 73
39	:	IV 8, X 70	40	:	IX 35

In Davies, Epig. 36 is a reference to an epigram by Sir Thomas More, Cayley's *Memoirs,* II, 346.

Unlike the earlier English epigrammatists and unlike Martial, Davies confines himself strictly to light social satire. On the one hand, he has abandoned all the unassimilable elements of didacticism and moral, religious, and theological propaganda; he has turned from *fabliaux,* proverbs, amatory verse, and the Greek Anthology to develop a new type of epigram, modeled on Martial. On the other hand, he has not Martial's variety; in his epigrams, which number all told only forty-eight, he has nothing corresponding to Martial's epitaphs, praise of country life, lines on works of art, or to the poetic, reflective, or pathetic element in Martial. He found evidently that Martial gave him a new point of view, from which amusement might be derived, toward the social life about him; and this amusement he tried to share by writing epigrams as nearly as he could like those which Martial might have written, had he been living in London in the 1590's.

In considering the form and style of Davies' work, we must not forget that he was after all an amateur, without the interest or the point of view of either the scholar or the professional author. Therefore we need not expect of him an exact rendering of Martial's mode of expression. On the whole, in structure the Englishman's epigrams are simpler, looser, and less varied. His favorite form consists exclusively of statements in the third person, the exposition containing a description or an incident, the conclusion his comment. The epigrams quoted above illustrate this type. Davies makes much less use than Martial of the forms which approximate dialogue. In only one epigram out of five does he use the second person and address his victim directly. Although not devoid of the rhetorical question and answer, and the quotation so frequent in Martial, Davies' writing is not pervaded by these devices. As a result, in spite of the ease and lightness of Davies' style, his epigrams do not, like Martial's, resemble bits of conversation; he does not give the effect of talking himself with his victim, or of speaking with a friend about a third person. Not that there is a lack of veri-

similitude in Davies' work; but this verisimilitude is due, not as in Martial to the structure of his epigrams, but to another cause.

This cause is Davies' wealth of detail and his vivid descriptive power. When we read of Gella's green silk stockings and taffeta petticoat with gold fringe, or of "yonder melancholy gentleman" who is meditating, not on the Empire's struggle with the Turk or "the Irish mutining," but on his great black feather and a visit to Paris Garden or to the Cock Pit, we can hardly help believing in the reality of these persons.[21] In fact, Davies' greatest art is exhibited in the individual portraits he draws by showing how one idiosyncrasy manifests itself in language, clothes, or action. There is much more of this use of specific detail in Davies than in Martial; it is characteristic of him to develop an epigram by an enumeration of particulars. To this manner of writing is due Davies' comparative lack of terseness and concision.

As Davies shows less variety and skill than Martial in the structure and development of his epigrams, so does he also in the pointing of them. Not a few of Davies' compositions are entirely lacking in point. He relies chiefly for the effect of his conclusions on contrast and incongruity, intended to surprise the reader. Closer to Martial are such ironical innuendos, not uncommon in Davies, as that in the close of epigram 41:

> By lawfull mart, and by unlawfull stealth,
> Paulus, in spite of envy, fortunate,
> Derives out of the Ocean so much wealth,
> As he may well maintaine a lord's estate;
> But on the land a little gulfe there is,
> Wherein he drowneth all the wealth of his.

But in general Davies' points are more obvious than Martial's, and less dependent upon manner of expression.

The rhetorical devices of parallelism and repetition are not unknown to Davies. In several epigrams—Nos. 2, 28, 36, 37—he uses repetition to heighten parallel structure. The first

[21] Epigs. 26, 47.

fourteen lines of No. 19 end with the word *dog;* the first line of Nos. 28 and 30 is repeated as the last line. But his rhetoric is most like Martial's in Epigram 18, quoted above, on the "false knave Flaccus." These few instances, however, serve rather to emphasize the difference than the likeness, for Davies uses these devices not often and only for striking effect; his style is not colored and pervaded by them. Consequently, his writing lacks the flash and finish of Martial's.

The same statement holds of Davies' treatment of his verse. That effectiveness which Martial secures by fitting his parallelisms and repetitions into his verse structure, is necessarily wanting to Davies' writing. Yet Davies shows some sense of the relation between the structure of his epigrams and their verse form. He generally concludes his epigrams with a couplet containing the point, and in the body uses alternating rimes; a line, a couplet, or a stanza he allots to each element of the epigram. In this respect also, as in the others of structure and rhetorical effectiveness, Davies' work marks a beginning, but scarcely more, toward an approximation of Martial's literary form. The resemblance between the two is to be found rather in their choice of subject-matter and in their attitude toward it.

Yet even in their spirit the two differ. Davies is the fresher in his enjoyment of men's absurdities and the keener in his amusement at them; he is gayer, more light-hearted and high-spirited; he is at once less tolerant and less jaded than Martial, and nowhere cries out, as Martial does with obviously sincere sickness of heart, at the life he had to lead. The explanation is that their lives were radically unlike. Martial was a parasite dependent for his bread on the whims of a corrupt society, Davies a young gentleman of independent means and assured position who threw himself into the life of London only because it gave him pleasure. Yet the interests of the two were identical: the humorous or the vicious aspects of everyday life in the metropolis.

Davies received immediate recognition. Richard Carew in 1595–96? wrote that if the reader wished an English equivalent for Martial, he must read "Sir *John Davies* and others."[22] Guilpin in 1598 referred to Davies as "our English Martial."[23] Writing in the same year, Bastard made two references to Davies and preferred him to Heywood.[24] Harington[25] and Thomas Freeman[26] also made complimentary allusions to his epigrams. This immediate popularity among "the better sort" to which in his last epigram he himself refers, shows that his writing was admirably suited to the taste of the time, at least among a certain portion of the literary class, the younger generation, namely, to which he himself belonged. The older epigram never found itself, never took root, whereas the new at once showed itself admirably suited to its environment.[27]

3. Sir John Harington

Sir John Harington belonged to the same class of society as Sir John Davies. He was born in 1561, educated at Eton and Cambridge, and entered Lincoln's Inn. He seems to have looked rather to the court than to the legal profession for advancement. His father was in Elizabeth's favor, and he himself was her godson. His position at court was not unlike that which Heywood had occupied: he apparently felt himself licensed as a sort of jester to amuse. By translating the most indecent episode of the *Orlando Furioso,* he brought the Queen's displeasure upon his head; she ordered him to retire until he had completed a rendering of the whole poem.[28] It was published in 1591.

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[22] *Eliz. Crit. Essays,* ed. G. G. Smith, II, 293.

[23] *Skialetheia,* Collier's reprint, Epig. 20.

[24] *Chrestoleros,* Spenser Soc. *Publ.,* Bk. II, Epig. 15, Bk. III, Epig. 3.

[25] *Epigrams,* Bk. III, No. 21, 1633 ed.

[26] *Rubbe and a great Cast,* 1614, part 2, Epig. 100; quoted in Dyce's *Marlowe,* p. 359, note.

[27] For Davies' *Yet Other Twelve Wonders of the World,* see below, p. 372.

[28] See article by Creighton in *D. N. B.*

Although the first collected edition of Harington's epigrams was not published until 1618, six years after his death, we may suppose that he began writing them at about the same time that Davies was composing his, and that the bulk of them were written by 1600. The majority of those we are able to date fall in the years 1596–1600, and while this affords no proof that the rest were written at the same time, it is not unreasonable to suppose that most of them were written while the author was at court, to amuse the private circle of his friends and acquaintances. If this be true, we may give as the general date of Harington's epigrams the years 1591–1599.[29]

We shall, then, regard Harington's work as approximately contemporary with that of Davies, the two of them being the pioneers in the new development of the epigram and preceding Guilpin, Bastard, and Weever. To be sure, the amount of influence exerted by Harington on his contemporaries is somewhat problematical since his epigrams were first published in 1618. No doubt they may have had a fairly wide circulation

[29] References are to 1633 ed. of *Epigrams,* bound in with *Orlando Fur.* 1634. Epigs. ii 85 and iii 26 are dated in title 1593 and 1595, iii 21 refers to Davies' Epig. 48 which in turn refers to trans. of *Orl. Fur.* published in 1591. The latest date we can fix is 1601; in iv 10 Harington refers to execution of Essex, which took place in that year. Other dates are: after 1596, i 43–46, etc., referring to *Metamorphosis of Ajax,* 1596; ii 64, 84 referring to Bastard's *Chrestoleros,* 1598; ii 87 written on the eve of Essex's expedition to Ireland in 1599; iv 6 written apparently while Harington was in Ireland in 1599. Reference in ii 36 to the Harvey-Nashe controversy, which flourished 1592–1597. If Harington was married *ca.* 1584 (see *D. N. B.*), then ii 72 and iv 4 were written *ca.* 1598, for in them he says that he has been married for fourteen years.

One epigram calls for separate discussion. It is i 42, an epitaph on Turbervile, whose death has commonly been given *ca.* 1610, in accordance with the *D. N. B.* (article by T. Seccombe). The only reason for this date is thus stated: "'From the fact that the 1611 edition of the *Faulconrie* is labelled 'Heretofore published by George Turbervile, gentleman,' it may be presumed that the original author and compiler was dead prior to that year.'" Again, it is pointed out that Turbervile has verses at the end of *Lazarillo de Tormes,* 1596, trans. by David Rowland (not Rowlands, as in *D. N. B.*). But the first edition of this work was published in 1576, and, not being extant, may well have contained the verses alluded to, inasmuch as they are already in the 1586 ed. (see article on David Rowland, *D. N. B.*). Since there is no evidence that Turbervile was living even so late as 1590, Harington's epitaph may well have been written some years before 1600. On Turbervile's life, see H. E. Rollins, *Mod. Phil.,* XV, 535 ff.

in manuscript; yet it is noteworthy that we do not find immediate references to them, as we do, for instance, to those of Davies.

Harington's position as an English epigrammatist is one of some importance. For one thing, he has left a considerable body of work, consisting of 340 epigrams divided into four books. In the second place, he introduced a large quantity of Martial into English, in not wholly inadequate translations and imitations. He borrowed more directly than Davies from Martial, and more largely than the other men treated in this chapter. He himself, in ii 30, acknowledges his thefts, saying, "I the Romans rob, by wit and Art."[30]

In general, Harington as a translator is uninspired but not quite incompetent. His command of his English medium is not so good as Davies', but better than Guilpin's and Bastard's. The following are representative specimens of his work:

Of Galla's goodly Periwigge: ii 66

You see the goodly hayre that *Galla* weares.
'Tis certain her own hayr, who would have thought it?
She sweares it is her owne: and true she sweares,
For hard by Temple-barre last day she bought it.
So faire a haire, upon so foule a forehead,
Augments disgrace, and showes the grace is borrowed.

[30] The appended list of parallels indicates to what extent he plundered Martial. All but a few are unmistakable borrowings; many are close translations. The numerals on the left indicate Harington's books; those on the right, Martial's:

i 5: IX 81	i 9, 10: III 61	i 11: V 18
i 21: II 32	i 31: XI 35	i 39: I 72
i 49: II 12	i 84: II 44	i 85: Spec. 4
i 86: XII 34	i 94: I 73	
ii 3: II 15	ii 4: I 74	ii 5: IV 69
ii 9: VIII 17	ii 10: I 81	ii 14: IV 21
ii 21: III 3	ii 28: V 76	ii 29: III 15
ii 40: V 75	ii 47: VII 65	ii 48: VI 41
ii 50: I 99, 103, IV 51	ii 51: IX 48	ii 66: VI 12
ii 68: II 55	ii 69: I 27	ii 70: IV 15
ii 73: IX 9	ii 75: VI 66	ii 94: I 85
iii 3: II 21		
iv 1: I 38	iv 2: I 40	iv 3: IX 14
iv 16: I 75	iv 29: XII 93	iv 37: I 64
iv 51: Suppos. 5	iv 52: I 19	iv 56: XII 10
iv 62: II 38	iv 74: I 117, IV 72	iv 81: V 61

Martial VI 12

Iurat capillos esse, quos emit, suos
Fabulla: numquid [ergo], Paule, peierat?

Harington i 49

How is't, Don Pedros breath is still perfumd,
And that he never like himselfe doth smell?
I like it not, for still it is presum'd,
Who smelleth ever well, smels never well.

Martial II 12

Esse quid hoc dicam quod olent tua basia murram
quodque tibi est numquam non alienus odor?
hoc mihi suspectum est, quod oles bene, Postume, semper:
Postume, non bene olet qui bene semper olet.

The former of these parallels illustrates Harington's commonest fault in rendering Martial: his tendency to expand and enlarge, to indulge in unnecessary explanation as if he feared that any sort of implication would be obscure. In the second, his substitution of the third for the second person is characteristic, with the consequent loss in personal and colloquial tone. On the other hand, the final couplet of ii 66, which has no counterpart in Martial, shows that Harington has learned to use balanced antithesis marked by alliteration and word play; and in the final verse of i 49 he has succeeded in heightening Martial's use of sound to emphasize the paradox. Harington, however, is commonly less successful; more frequently Martial's rhetoric is diminished in the process of translation; observe, for instance, the loss of effectiveness in the following:

Sith you do nothing ask, I nothing grant ye (i 9);

Si nil, Cinna, petis, nil tibi, Cinna, nego (III 61).

Put not in any one too much belief:
Your joy will be the lesse, so will your grief (i 86);

nulli te facies nimis sodalem:
gaudebis minus et minus dolebis (XII 34).

Like Davies a conscious partisan in the anti-Elizabethan reaction, Harington belongs to the new order of English epigrammatists.[31] He rarely indulges in general reflections on the wickedness of the age or in moral sententiousness. Petrarcan love and the manner of the Anthology are equally foreign to him. In no respect is he more typical of the new spirit than in the fidelity with which—and not in his translations only—he follows Martial, of whom he is a much more faithful, though less able, imitator than Davies. He includes in his work the types of epigram cultivated by Martial: the laudatory, the reflective and aphoristic, the epitaphs, and so on, as well as the satiric, although far the greater number of his compositions, of course, deal in humorous satire. He possesses all the distinguishing features of Martial, except those which depend on a high order of literary ability; he has not Martial's occasional pathos and sentiment, and he has not succeeded in acquiring Martial's style. A cruder writer addressing a less sophisticated audience, he does not trust so much to irony and innuendo; he is commonly lacking in terseness and concision; he favors, comparatively, the more obvious types of concluding point; his manner of writing has less of the brilliance that comes from the parallelism, the balance, the antithesis, and the other devices that show mastery of formal rhetoric. He has less than Martial of the colloquialism which lends ease and verisimilitude to the Roman's epigrams, for he makes less use of question, answer, and quotation, of the second person and direct address. Yet in all these matters, the difference is one of degree only; in both subject-matter and form, Harington is more subservient than Davies to Martial, and for that reason in many respects offered a better basis for the work of later epigrammatists. His very inferiority to Davies in originality may have proved a kind of benefit in the development of the English epigram.

[31] See above, pp. 329, 331. The circumstances of his translating the *Orlando Furioso* (above, p. 344) show that his motives were different from those which led such men as Spenser to imitate Ariosto.

For Harington, in spite of the greater variety in technique of his epigrams, is inferior to Davies as an original writer. He does not show Davies' independence in learning from Martial's treatment of Rome how himself to treat contemporary London. He has little of the graphic vividness, the picturesque detail, which renders Davies' work entertaining and instructive; although not devoid of references to contemporary circumstances, he is comparatively deficient in freshness of observation. Therefore, in spite of the devices which he has borrowed from Martial for particularizing his epigrams, and in spite of the fact that he talks about himself and his own affairs more than Davies does, we get a less distinct notion of his personality.

Harington also has connections with other earlier English epigrammatists. He may have known Kendall, and he certainly knew Heywood.[32] Harington refers to Heywood, and in several instances uses the same proverbial material; in other cases he reminds the reader of Heywood's style. Heywood's influence on Harington, indeed, may have been considerable.[33] Unlike Davies, furthermore, Harington makes use of proverbs and "mery jests"; to that extent he belongs less exclusively to the school of classical imitation, and serves as a sort of link to connect the later with the earlier English epigram.

4. Edward Guilpin

Davies' work in the development of the English epigram was continued by Edward Guilpin in *Skialetheia,* 1598.[34] A passage from this book has already been cited to show that Guilpin was a conscious inaugurator of the anti-Elizabethan

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[32] Compare Harington iii 37, "The Hermaphrodite," with Kendall, p. 17, "Hermaphroditus speaketh"; and iv 8 with Kendall, p. 253. I think a common source more probable than direct acquaintance on Harington's part with Kendall's book.

[33] See Harington i 29, iv 72, ii 56 (cf. Heywood, *Prov.*, Pt. II, chap. v), ii 102, i 62, i 92 (cf. Heywood, *Prov.*, Pt. II, chap. iv), iii 20, iv 50.

[34] Reprinted by J. P. Collier, *Misc. Tracts, Temp. Eliz. & Jac. I,* No. 4. For evidence of Guilpin's authorship, see Collier's introduction.

reaction.[35] Of the author almost nothing is known; he tells us, in Epigrams 22 and 52, that he was a Cambridge man and at the time of writing was at one of the Inns of Court. Evidently, therefore, he belonged to the same class as Davies and Harington. His volume contains seventy epigrams, followed by six satires.[36]

Guilpin beyond question was a disciple of Davies. The plainest piece of imitation is his twentieth epigram, in which Davies is referred to as "our English Martiall" and which is an avowed copy of Davies' second epigram, a description of a "gull."[37] There are several other unmistakable borrowings.[38] No reader of *Skialetheia* can fail to observe the general similarity of Guilpin's to Davies' epigrams, both in substance and in form. Our account of Davies' work, save for certain not unimportant reservations, will serve also for an account of Guilpin's. The latter also, with a wealth of detail, satirizes the social life of London; many of his epigrams are constructed of statements in the third person, with final comment; for his point he uses surprising contrast or incongruity.

The first of our reservations concerns a difference in spirit and style. Guilpin manifests an intensification of the new realistic spirit; he is sterner and harsher, and shows, for all his disgust, a liking of filth for filth's sake and a tendency to wallow in his own loathing. His work is more uniformly obscene than Davies'. He lays claim, indeed, to a high moral purpose:

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[35] See above, p. 330.

[36] At the end of the last epigram are the letters "*S. A.*," from which Mr. Alden (*Formal Satire*, p. 149) infers that "it is not necessary to suppose that all of these epigrams were the work of the author of *Skialetheia.*" I believe that these letters must be explained otherwise than as a signature. The style, which is strongly marked, seems the same throughout.

[37] This piece by Davies is an imitation of Martial III 65, which in turn Guilpin paraphrases in Epig. 38.

[38] The other parallels are:

Guilpin	Davies
17	: 27
22	: 23, after Martial III 95.
25	: 39, after Martial IV 8, X 70.

Conclusion to the Reader, Epigram 70

(Reader) when thou hast read this mad-cap stuffe
Wherein my Muse swaggers, as in her ruffe,
I know these orphants shal be soone renounced
Of every one, and unto death denounced: . . .
And justly to, for thou canst not misuse
More then I will, these bastards of my Muse.
I know they are passing filthy, scurvey lines;
I know they are rude, harsh, and unsavory rimes, . . .
Viewing this sin-drownd world, I purposely
Phisick'd my Muse, that thus unmannerly
She might beray our folly-soyled age,
And keepe decorum on a comick stage, . . .
I care not what the world doth think, or say:
There lies a morral under my leane play.

As a matter of fact, Guilpin is no more a serious preacher than is Davies; his extreme bitterness is by no means the same as true moral fervor.

Similarly, as to style, in contrast to Davies' ease and fluency, Guilpin's diction is sometimes crabbed, his constructions obscure, and his meter occasionally non-existent. This harshness of expression was evidently voluntary on Guilpin's part. In the lines just quoted, he makes plain that he conceives the epigram as identical in function with formal satire; and he labored under the notion that "a satire was not to be so transparent and clearly flowing a poem as verse of other sorts."[39]

For our purpose the most important difference between Guilpin and Davies is not in spirit and style, but in the advance which Guilpin marks in the structure of his epigrams. It is true that Guilpin's favorite form is the same as Davies'; yet it is also true that Guilpin makes a larger use of conversational devices and therefore approximates more nearly to Martial. This is shown in Guilpin's employment of rhetorical question and answer for introduction, transition, and conclusion, of direct address and the second person, and of exclamation. Epigram

[39] See Alden, *Formal Satire,* pp. 102 ff, for a discussion of the deliberate cultivation of obscurity and roughness by the early satirists. He is of the opinion that this tendency has been grossly exaggerated, but agrees that it existed, and that it may have been due to the critical notion of Persius then prevalent.

57, *Of Nigrina,* for example, is closer to Martial's dialogue form than anything of Davies; and this type is more frequent in Guilpin than in Davies:

> Why should Nigrina weare her mask so much?
> Her skins lawn's not so fine so soone to staine;
> Her tendrest poultry may endure the touch;
> Her face, face and out-face, the wind againe: . . .
> And to be briefe, she being all plaine Jone,
> Why is she mask'd to keepe that where is none?
> O, sir! she's painted, and you know the guise:
> Pictures are curtaind from the vulgar eyes.

These structural devices Guilpin learned directly, no doubt, from Martial; for there is sufficient evidence that he was acquainted with Martial on his own account. I quote one parallel:[40]

To Livia (Epigram 4)

> Livia, I con thee thanke, when thou dost kisse,
> Thou turn'st thy cheeke: see what good nature is!
> For well thou knowst thy breaths infection
> Able to turn my stomack upside down,
> Which when I thinke on, but for manner's sake,
> I'll pray thee thy cheeke too away to take.

Martial II 10

> Basia dimidio quod das mihi, Postume, labro,
> laudo: licet demas hinc quoque dimidium.
> vis dare maius adhuc et inerrabile munus?
> hoc tibi habe totum, Postume, dimidium.

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[40] Other parallels with Martial are:

Guilpin	Martial
18	III 9
28	IX 10
38	III 65
45	IX 25
56	V 60, XII 61

The fourth parallel (45:IX 25) is of special interest. Martial's is against a man who grew jealous when his cup-bearer was admired by the poet. Guilpin substitutes the man's wife for his attendant. Kendall translating the same epigram in the *Flowers* (p. 50) makes the same change. Furthermore, Collier identifies Guilpin with the "E. G." whose verses were prefixed to the *Flowers.* If Guilpin wrote these lines, he must in 1598 have been nearly forty-five. But in *Skialetheia* are many indications (e.g., Epig. 22) that the author, like the other leaders of the anti-Elizabethan reaction, was a young man. And the change from cup-bearer to wife is too obvious to be significant.

Only in respect to structure, however, does Guilpin mark an advance in the imitation of Martial; his theory of the style appropriate to the epigram prevents his even striving for Martial's finish; his savage bitterness of temper estranged him from Martial and Martial's true followers; and otherwise he was content to be merely a continuator of the work begun by Davies.

5. Thomas Bastard

In the same year as Guilpin's *Skialetheia,* 1598, Thomas Bastard published his *Chrestoleros. Seven Bookes of Epigrammes,*[41] comprising some 285 pieces. He was born in 1566, he studied at Oxford, and he lets us know that at the time of writing he was a minister with a country charge.[42] The fact of Bastard's rural residence and of his profession has importance, not only as explaining the qualities of his work, but as showing that the epigram is entering a new phase. It is being cultivated by others than young men of wit and fashion in London, and is being written primarily for publication, not for the delectation of the composer's private friends. The only discernible motive for Bastard's having attempted the composition of epigrams is the hope of making a little money to relieve his pressing poverty.[43] The epigram is passing into the hands of professional writers.

Bastard derived his theory of the epigram from Martial. His most noteworthy remarks are in the introductory epistle: "My Lorde, Epigrames are a scarce worke, they have ever had but fewe writers, and yet too many . . . yet this is my comfort, that my booke is of the fashion. . . . Yet herein I may seem to have done something worthy the price of labour, that I have taught Epigrams to speake chastlie; besides, I have acquainted them with more gravitie of sence, and barring them of their

[41] Reprinted in Spenser Soc. *Publ.,* 47.

[42] See iv 3, vii 22, 23.

[43] See especially i 2; there are allusions to his poverty throughout the volume.

olde libertie, not onely forbidden them to be personall, but turned all their bitterness rather into sharpnesse.''[44] Critical comment is also to be found in several of his epigrams, of which I quote one:

Ad lectorem, i 3

Reader my booke flies low, and comes not neere,
The higher world, and the celestiall spheare.
Yet not so low, but that it doth despise
The earthes round lumpe, and farre above it flies.
This is the middle labour of my pen,
To drawe thee forth (Reader) a mappe of men.[45]

In his claim that he spares personal satire and depicts human nature, Bastard is following Martial, who says:

Hunc servare modum nostri novere libelli,
parcere personis, dicere de vitiis;

non hic Centauros, non Gorgonas Harpyiasque
invenies: hominem pagina nostra sapit.[46]

Indeed, Bastard avows his purpose of imitating Martial in the lines

My booke is plaine, and would have if it may,
An english Reader but a latine witt.[47]

In short, his object seems to have been to do what Davies and Harington had been doing: to produce an English counterpart to Martial.

Nevertheless, the most outstanding peculiarity of the book is the patent unfitness of the author for the composition of epigrams. His conspicuous traits are all of other sorts, religious and moral fervor, didacticism, love of generalities, and lack of

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[44] When Bastard says that epigrams are both scarce and fashionable, we may take him to imply that the fashion was still so new that books of epigrams had not yet had time to multiply.

[45] See also i 1, ii 16, vi 28, vii 38, 40.

[46] Martial X 33 (quoted on Bastard's title-page); X 4.

[47] i 7.

wit and humor.[48] Bastard sums up his view of life when he says that his wish is for "a short life, Reader, and a long grave."[49] This melancholy despair is far from the point of view of either Martial or Davies; and this difference in fundamentals inevitably works itself out in the work of the three men. Bastard often inveighs against the sinfulness of this sin-ridden world, and against various vices—pride, gluttony, avarice, envy.[50] He shows many traces of his theological training in his references to Biblical matters and in his use of the terms of scholastic philosophy.[51]

If I have stressed one side only of Bastard's work, explaining why he was not fitted to write epigrams of light social satire such as Davies',[52] Harington's, and Guilpin's, I would not have it supposed that he attempted none of this sort. On the contrary, a third or a half of his volume is made up of them. The point is that they are lacking in that definiteness, vividness, and cleverness which are essential to the success of the *genre*. In part this may be due to Bastard's rural residence; at any rate, he has not the eye for the humors of the metropolis which lends interest to the work of the others. His satire is vague and unindividual.

As to Bastard's relation to Martial, much has been implied in the preceding discussion. Only in two classes has Bastard anything in common with Martial, in his satire and in his eulogies, which are numerous but of little significance. He expresses his high admiration for Martial in i 17:

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[48] Harington, ii 64, indicates that contemporaries were alive to Bastard's shortcomings:

> Though dusty wits of this ungratefull time
> Carpe at thy book of Epigrams, and scoffe it:
> Yet wise men know to mix the sweet with profit
> Is worthy praise, not onely void of crime.

[49] iv 38; see also iv 32.

[50] See, e.g., i 19, ii 18, iv 7, 13.

[51] See, e.g., i 4, 6, vi 12.

[52] Bastard's admiration of Davies is expressed in ii 15 and iii 3; and i 15 may be compared with Davies, Epig. 24, for a hint of imitation.

De Poëta Martiali

Martiall, in sooth none should presume to write,
Since time hath brought thy Epigrams to light:
For through our writing, thine so prais'de before
Have this obteinde, to be comended more:
Yet to our selves although we winne no fame,
Wee please, which get our maister a good name.

No doubt Bastard did his best to follow Martial, although he could not achieve much success. His nearest approach to Martial's spirit is in such epigrams as i 13, on legacies he did not get,[53] and in ii 13:

In Cacum

Cacus, if any chance on him to call,
Drawes forth the loafe and cheese, but if they eate
A golden sentence he drawes forth withall,
Friendship consisteth not in drinke and meate.
This is a goolden sentence I dare sweare.
This sentence saves him many pound's a yeare.[54]

I quote the latter because it shows Bastard's closest approximation to Martial without definite borrowing. As a rule, however, what Bastard and Martial have in common is due, not to any similarity in the minds or ideals of the two, but simply to out and out imitation on Bastard's part.[55]

Bastard shows little or no sense of Martial's form and technique. His work contains little of Martial's effective rhetoric and little of Martial's terseness. A favorable example of Bastard's writing is i 35:

Although *Thersites* have a filthy face,
And staring eyes, and little outward grace,
Yet this he hath to make amend's for all,
Nature herself is not more naturall.

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[53] Cf. Martial X 97.

[54] Martial often attacks niggardly hosts: see I 43, III 12, 23, 94, etc.

[55] I append a list of parallels:

Bastard	Martial
i 28	I 107, VIII 56
i 29	III 37, XII 13
i 33	II 44, IX 46
v 13	IX 78
v 28	VIII 35
vii 6	VIII 18

Here is Bastard's typical structure: exposition in the third person, usually descriptive or narrative, with a conclusion containing the author's comment. But in general Bastard inclines to the more obvious kinds of point, when indeed he has any at all—when his 'point' is not mere abuse. He was unfitted both by nature and by environment to succeed in imitating Martial.

6. John Weever

The next volume to consider is John Weever's *Epigrammes in the Oldest Cut and Newest Fashion,* 1599.[56] The book consists of seven "weeks," each week containing about twenty-three epigrams. McKerrow dates most of them about 1597–98. Weever (born 1576) was at Cambridge from 1594 to about 1598, whence he retired to his home in Lancashire. His place of residence accounts for the character of his work. Not being versed in the ways of the metropolis, he gives us little of the picturesque detail of contemporary fashions and customs which lends interest to the work of Davies and Guilpin. He is thrown back upon a stricter imitation than theirs, and his work, possibly because it was written in a university, has a more literary cast.[57]

For the most part Weever adheres to satire and eulogy, but a few of his epigrams are of the didactic, aphoristic, generalizing type.[58] The pun is his favorite form of humor. His chief source is Martial, but he has also used the Renaissance epigrammatists; he has borrowed, for instance, from Beza, J. Secundus, Parkhurst, Buchanan, and others.[59] His satire is of the general sort,

[56] Ed. R. B. McKerrow. For Weever's life, see Introduction; also article by S. Lee in *D. N. B.*

[57] The chief interest of Weever's volume is in the references to Shakespeare, Spenser, Drayton, Jonson, Daniel, and other writers. His references to these men do not show a strong anti-Elizabethan bent.

[58] See, e.g., i 9, *De Ingenio, Fortuna, Fama;* i 10, *De Fama et Amore.* These are almost certainly translations from neo-Latin epigrams.

[59] iv 11 is from Beza's epigram on Marot, *Poemata,* p. 57 (Kendall, p. 159); i 22 from Secundus, Epig. 5; iv 18 also from Secundus according to McKerrow's note; i 20 and v 3, from Parkhurst (Kendall, pp. 211, 217); vi 12, from Buchanan Lib. II, Epig. 10; with vi 8, cf. Stroza's epitaph on Pico della Mirandola (Dodd, *Epigrammatists,* p. 109); with iii 13, cf. a Greek epigram translated by Sir T. More (Cayley, *Memoirs,* II, 317). McKerrow also notes the following: iii 18 from Ausonius, iv 9 from Catullus, v 18 from Marullo. Undoubtedly many more sources could be found in neo-Latin epigrams. With i 17, cf. Davies, Epig. 18.

the objects of which may be found in any country and in any age. The following is typical, as applicable in ancient Rome or in modern New York as in Weever's Cambridge or London:

In Fucam (iii 15)

In *Fucaes* face the Graces seeme to mart,
So like she is the blushing rose-red morne, . . .
Yet *Fuca* dare not venture in the ayre,
For feare the water wash away her fayre.

In his use of Martial, Weever shows little of that independence which distinguishes the work of Davies. Sometimes he merely translates, as in iii 20:

Translation ex Martial

Sabidi I love thee not, nor why I wot,
But this I wot, *Sabidi* I love thee not.

Martial I 32

Non amo te, Sabidi, nec possum dicere quare:
hoc tantum possum dicere, non amo te.

Here Weever has happily preserved, and even increased, the rhetorical figures of the Latin without losing the terseness of the original. The following, however, is more typical of his method:

Ad Quintum (v 6)

Thou askt one thing of me which I denied,
That one thing nothing was, then thou replied,
If it was nothing which thou askt of me,
Then nothing *Quintus* I denied to thee:
Now yet for nothing, one thing *Quintus* know,
For nothing something *Quintus* thou dost ow.

Martial III 61

Esse nihil dicis quidquid petis, inprobe Cinna:
si nil, Cinna, petis, nil tibi, Cinna, nego.[60]

[60] I append a table of parallels:

Weever	: Martial	Weever	: Martial
ii 14	X 43	vi 17	IV 77
iii 20	I 32	vi 19	VIII 81
v 4	II 79	vi 21	IX 81
v 5	V 79	vii 2	IX 14
v 6	III 61	vii 3	XII 56
v 15	III 13, III 94	vii 12	VII 77
v 17	II 10		
v 20	IV 65		

It will be seen that in the first place Weever has padded in making his translation, and that he uses repetition to create an effect entirely different from that produced by Martial. In the Latin, the repetition brings out the point more sharply; it is used to lend clarity and emphasis; whereas in the English the result is rather a puzzling complication, as of a riddle. Both the padding and the alteration in stylistic effect are characteristic of Weever's technique and taste.

Weever makes extensive use of paronomasia—by far his most frequent kind of 'point'—and of repetition, particularly repetition of phrases at the beginnings of consecutive lines. Both devices are illustrated in the following, which may be taken as representative of Weever when working independently:

In Stratum (ii 15)

Fortie foure pence brought Stratus to a play,
Fortie foure pounds he carried yet away:
A Coni-catcher who calls him for the same?
A money-catcher may be *Stratus* name.

He is lacking, however, in the subtler use of balance that gives finish and emphasis to diction without forcing itself on the reader's attention; he uses the schemes only in the crude form appropriate to his crude style.

Weever has also mastered some of the simpler forms of epigrammatic structure. He rarely uses, it is true, Martial's devices of direct address, of using the second person, of quotation and direct question; moreover, many of Weever's epigrams consist merely of statement in the third person and comment. Nevertheless, he frequently employs rhetorical questions (in the third person) for exposition, transition, and point; and thus he approximates the simpler of Martial's characteristic structures. An illustration is the previously quoted ii 15, *In Stratum;* another is i 15:

In Monocerotem

Monoceros hath strength, but hath no witte,
And therefore one horne will the foole befitte:
But how can't be that he but one horne haue?
When to his neighbor *Brusus* two he gaue?

Weever's relation to Martial is only a little closer than that of Bastard: he translates from Martial more or less faithfully—and that is all. These men must have found something in Martial that appealed to them, but they evidently lacked the taste or the ability needed for intelligent and thorough-going imitation. Presumably they saw in Martial certain of his less refined and more conspicuous traits: his coarse humor, his brutal wit, and his most striking displays of rhetoric. If they perceived his keenness of observation and the finer aspects of his literary art, or even his subtler forms of wit and humor, they did not, or could not, appropriate these qualities to themselves.

7. Conclusion

Having completed our survey of the five English epigrammatists who wrote during the last decade of the sixteenth century, we must now ask ourselves how they differ and what they have in common, not only as touching their relation to Martial, but in other respects also.

First, as to form, they have more in common than might be inferred from the preceding pages. They all but confine themselves to two meters: alternating rimes with a concluding couplet —though the couplet is not invariably present; and series of couplets—in both cases using pentameter lines. They all use both these forms, and while one of them may show a slight preference for one rime scheme or the other, the preference is so slight as to be negligible; one may safely say that the work of these men is evenly divided between the two. The former, alternating rime with concluding couplet, we found employed by Wyatt, the latter, the series of couplets, by Grimald; and the successors of these earlier writers, who preferred fourteeners and poulter's measure, never entirely abandoned the other meters. Between the two rime schemes mentioned, there is little to choose. If the alternating rime with final couplet serves particularly well to emphasize the point and to separate conclusion

from exposition, on the other hand the series of couplets lends itself with special success to effects of brilliant polish and concision throughout the whole piece. At any rate, these two forms we may now regard as established for the epigram at the period we are treating.

To what extent our five writers deliberately cultivated roughness and imperspicuity of style is a matter of doubt. Guilpin, who also wrote satires, we saw reason to believe went out of his way to avoid ease and lucidity.[61] Davies' manner of writing indicates no such endeavor, an easy naturalness being the special mark of his style; and on the whole, though one speaks with less assurance in his case, no intentional difficulty is perceptible in Harington's work. In the case of Bastard and Weever, we have no means of discriminating the results of volition from the effects of ineptitude.

There is, however, this to be said, that both Bastard and Weever as well as Guilpin regarded, or affected to regard, their epigrams as directed with moral intent toward the purification of the times, as sharing, i.e., the same purpose as satire.[62] And so inseparably was satire connected in their minds with harsh phrasing that they may have carried the association over into epigrammatic composition. Weever, to be sure, asserts

> I cannot, I protest, yet understand
> The wittie, learned, Satyres mystery,

but on the other hand he says:

> But whip and scourge ye *Epigrammatists:*
> To whip and scourge, my chiefest meaning is.[63]

This widespread notion that epigrams should be written to correct and castigate the age[64] should not be regarded as pure

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[61] Above, p. 351.

[62] See Bastard ii 16, v 2, 3, 10; Bastard's whole book witnesses to the sincerity of his moral purpose.

[63] Ed. McKerrow, pp. 11, 12.

[64] See Alden, *Rise of Satire,* pp. 134, 226, for similar purpose to "scourge" on the part of contemporary satirists.

affectation or mere concession to the puritans, to obtain license for licentiousness; it indicates, though with exaggeration, something of the true impulse which led to epigram writing. But to what extent the intimacy in their minds of the satire with the epigram influenced the style of the latter, we cannot be certain.

One thing, however, we may state positively: that none of these men exercised or pretended to exercise painstaking art in the production of their epigrams, whether for the reason suggested in the last paragraph or for another. Undoubtedly Davies and Weever, and probably the rest, thought of their pieces as ephemeral. There are allusions to the transiency of the fad for epigrams:

> Besides, this Muse of mine, and the blacke feather
> Grew both together fresh in estimation:
> And both growne stale, were cast away together:
> What fame is this that scarce lasts out a fashion?[65]

"Epigramms are much like unto Almanacks serving especially for the yeare for the which they are made, then these (right judging Readers) being for one yeare pend, and in another printed: are past date before they come from the Presse."[66] It was incumbent upon the writer of epigrams not to take his work over-seriously; and if he did not regard them as trifles written to while away an idle hour and tossed off to amuse his friends, at any rate the Elizabethan epigrammatist—even Bastard, who in all conscience labored hard enough over his[67]—had no illusion that he was creating high and immortal works of art. The epigram was regarded as a lowly and impermanent species of poetry, ill-befitting the serious solicitude and conscientious workmanship one might properly bestow on an epic or a tragedy.

Whether from lack of high seriousness or from excess of moral fervor in "scourging" contemporaries, these writers were as far from attempting beauty of form and elegance of diction

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[65] Davies, Epig. 48.

[66] Weever, ed. McKerrow, p. 13.

[67] See especially vii 40; but references to his weariness and hard work are numerous.

as their readers from desiring those qualities. Just that, in fact, was what they were getting away from. They had had a surfeit of glorified and exquisite language as well as of inflated emotion and too-flowing sentiment. The last thing such a writer wished was to be mellifluous. In recent years—since, say, 1912—a similar reaction has been conspicuous in English and American poetry, by way of protest against the sweetness of Tennyson's and Swinburne's followers.

The taste for epigram led to one interesting development: a revival of Heywood. In 1589, Puttenham referred to him as "*John Heywood,* the Epigrammatist, who for the myrth and quicknesse of his conceits more then for any good learning that was in him came to be well benefited by the king."[68] Davies boasted in Epigram 29:

> Haywood, that did in Epigrams excell,
> Is now put downe since my light Muse arose.

In the *Metamorphosis of Ajax,* 1596, Harington replied:[69] "This Haywood, for his proverbs and epigrams, is not yet put down by any of our country, though one doth indeed come near him, that graces him the more in saying that he puts him down." And we have already seen what knowledge of Heywood Harington shows in his own epigrams.[70] Bastard and Freeman preferred Davies, but admired Heywood;[71] Bastard's comment is worth quoting in part:

> Ad Lectorem (iii 11)
>
> Reader if *Heywood* lived now againe
> Whome time of life hath not of praise bereaved,
> If he would write, I could expresse his vaine,
> Thus he would write, or else I am deceived.

> Epigram 12. Of a pudding
>
> The end is all, and in the end the praise of all depends.
> A podding merits double praise, a podding hath two ends.

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68 G. G. Smith, *Eliz. Crit. Essays,* II, 63; for other references to Heywood, see index to the same work.

69 Chiswick reprint, 1814, p. 42.

70 Above, p. 349.

71 See notes, p. 344 above.

Then follow six other parodies of Heywood. These lines are a remarkable witness to the continued vitality of his work.

A little later John Heath gave a sound criticism of Heywood in one of his epigrams:

> Heywood the old English epigrammatist
> Had *wit* at will, and *art* was all he mist:
> But now adaies we of the modern frie
> Have art and labour with wits penurie.[72]

It is noteworthy that Heywood should have survived in popularity and affected the later epigram, whereas Wyatt, Turbervile, and Kendall were without influence. Heywood's survival was due to his adherence to the native and popular strain in English literature, and he therefore shared in the general revival of the literature of the mid-century, which I shall take up in the next chapter. As to Heywood's connection with our five epigrammatists, whether or not he had much direct and obvious influence, he probably helped keep alive the taste in epigram for "mery jests" and proverbs, and he may have seemed to sanction roughness of form.

We are now in a better position to understand and to summarize the relation of the five epigrammatists of the 1590's to Martial. There is no doubt that in one way or another he was the master and the model of them all. What, we may ask, was the source of Martial's appeal to these men? It is to be sought in the various phases of the anti-Elizabethan reaction. The roughness of form which played a part in that reaction these men not only tolerated but positively enjoyed, if they did not actively cultivate it. At first glance this taste might seem inconsistent with a thorough liking for Martial. But on the other hand there was much in his form and style which they would approve. They must have been attracted by its realism, its concision, its rhetorical rather than poetical quality. Martial's diction, as we saw, is the language of conversation treated with

[72] *Two Centuries of Epigrammes*, 1610; quoted in Warton's *Hist. Eng. Poetry*, IV, 81, note 2. See also Warton, IV, 87, note 1.

high art—and it was the colloquial quality rather than the art that pleased the anti-Elizabethans. Some even of the qualities due to art, however, they must have liked, such as Martial's animation and the absence of apparent striving for effect. Furthermore, the more obtrusive of his rhetorical tricks amused them.

But there is a sympathy deeper than mere liking for some aspects of Martial's style. I said that the pretense at castigation of the age could not be put down to mere affectation; and if we find in the productions of these men little true moral fervor, on the other hand we do discover a distaste for the world they lived in, a distaste ranging from the good-humored and amused contempt of Davies to the disgust, scorn, and despair of Bastard. Martial's epigrams include this whole range of feeling, though he, like the English writers, inclines to tolerance rather than to despair. They therefore naturally sympathized with his attitude. This lack of illusion, this concentration on the pettiness and the evil of contemporary life I tried to explain at the beginning of this chapter, to show why men "began to lose faith in high ideals and heroic sentiments."[73] At the time we are speaking of, they had found nothing to replace the illusions they had lost; the philosophy and the religion of the seventeenth century had not yet arrived; so they were left with neither illusions nor sustaining principles. All they could do was to observe the realities of the actual life about them, with a natural feeling that the world was out of joint. But in all this they correspond exactly to Martial: he, too, had no illusions, no religion, no philosophy worthy the name; he, too, was a realist depicting without affection the externals of everyday life. While men of more power and ability, such as Donne and Hall, were turning in search of a means of expression to Juvenal and Persius, these lesser men went to the classical author with whom they could best sympathize, to Martial. In his work they found the form—the classical epigram—by means of which they could

[73] H. V. Routh, *Camb. Hist. Eng. Lit.*, IV, 381.

best express their view of the world. The three conditions, then, which we named as requisite to imitation of Martial—namely, an appreciation of his skill, an interest in his subject matter, and sympathy with his spirit—were partially but not wholly fulfilled in the last decade of the sixteenth century. The epigrammatists of the 1590's were only pioneers or "primitives" in the English epigram; for its full development and for a full imitation of Martial, we must wait for a writer who has both the ability and the desire to compose epigrams in English which shall be worthy of comparison with those of the Roman.

CHAPTER IV

THE ENGLISH EPIGRAM: 1600 TO 1615

1. The Medieval Revival

Immediately after 1600 the epigram in England degenerated. Instead of being the creation of well-bred wits intended for the amusement of a circle of friends, it fell into the hands of another class, the hack-writers and journalists who tried to eke out a living by the sale of ephemeral pamphlets. It left its classical models and became popularized. It came to be written by and for people of less cultivation and lower in the social scale.[1]

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[1] I have been unable to see the following works:

P[arrot], H[enry]: *The Mous-Trap,* 1606; *Epigrams by H. P.* [possibly H. Peacham?], 1608; *Laquei Ridiculosi, or Springes to catch Woodcocks,* 1613; *The Mastive, or Young-Whelpe of the Old-Dogge,* 1615.

West, Richard: *Court of Conscience or Dick Whippers Sessions,* 1607. (? *A Century of Epigrams,* 1608).

Anon.: *Epigrams or Humours Lottery,* 1608 [by H. Parrot?].

Middleton, Richard: *Epigrams and Satyrs,* 1608; reprinted Beldornie Press, 1840.

W., R. [not Richard West—E. I. Carlyle in *D. N. B.*]: *Wyttes A B C, or a Centurie of Epigrams,* ?1608.

Heath, John: *Two Centuries of Epigrammes,* 1610.

Sharpe, Roger: *More fooles yet,* 1610.

Freeman, Thomas: *Rubbe and a Great Cast: and Runne and a Great Cast. The second Bowle. In 200 Epigrams,* 1614.

Gamage, William: *Linsi-Woolsie or Two Centuries of Epigrammes,* 1614.

Of Parrot, T. Seccombe says in *D. N. B.* that he "wrote mainly for the delectation of choice spirits among the Templars, and there seems little doubt that he was himself a member of one of the Inns of Court." On Richard Middleton, see Alden, *Rise of Satire,* pp. 172–174. He lived and wrote, apparently, in York. John Heath entered New College, Oxford, in 1605, at the age of twenty; he was admitted perpetual fellow in 1609, took his B.A. in 1609, his M.A. in 1613. Probably, therefore, his epigrams were composed in Oxford. See *D. N. B.* Freeman took his B.A. at Oxford in 1611, whereupon he "retired to the great city and set up for a poet." See *D. N. B.*

There were, to be sure, a few scattering epigrams published after 1600 which belong to the better class. Campion wrote twenty-one epigrams to illustrate the meters discussed in his *Observations in the Art of English Poesie*, 1602; they are 'pointed' and deal in satire and abuse, and generally adhere to the classical tradition.[2] Twenty-three epigrams of the same sort by Francis Davison were published in his *Poetical Rhapsody*, 1602; the first thirteen of these are faithful translations from Martial.[3] Joshua Sylvester also wrote a few epigrams.[4] John Donne's epigrams are of more consequence. Though they were not published until 1633, Donne wrote them in his youth, about 1596–1603. In compression, in paradox and satire, they are as close an equivalent to Martial as we shall find, though none is derived from him. I quote two which may be taken as standards of excellence for English epigrams of this sort:

Antiquary

If in his study he hath so much care
To hang all old strange things, let his wife beware.

Disinherited

Thy father all from thee, by his last will,
Gave to the poor; thou hast good title still.[5]

Such epigrams as the foregoing, however, were exceptions to the rule; as a whole, the epigram fell in with the popular

[2] Campion's *Works*, ed. P. Vivian, pp. 44–49.

[3] Ed. A. H. Bullen, I, 93–101; see notes. Those from Martial are versions of I 19, 83; II 15; III 15, 61; V 47, 75, 81; VII 43; VIII 35; XI 67; XII 12; *Suppos.* 5. On the translation of V 81 ("Semper pauper eris, si pauper es"), Bullen quotes a note (p. 95, note 2) from Sir Harris Nicolas, who edited the *Rhapsody* in 1826. From Harl. MS 290, Nicolas cites ten epigrams translated from or based on V 81 and on Heywood, *Epigs. on Proverbs*, 286, as well as renderings of three other Latin epigrams, and attributes them all to Francis Davison. See above, p. 306.

[4] Eighteen in *Epigrams and Epitaphs upon Warre and Peace* (ed. A. B. Grosart, *Chertsey Worthies Lib.* II, 51–52); dated by allusions to Peace of Vervins, 1598.

[5] Donne, *Poetical Works*, ed. H. J. C. Grierson; Epigs., I, 75–78; for date see II, 59, also E. K. Chambers' ed. of Donne (*Muses Lib.*), I, 247, on allusion to Rader's ed. of Martial, 1602. Grierson, II, 58: "Donne's epigrams were much admired. . . . Drummond says: 'I think if he would he might easily be the best epigrammatist we have found in English; of which I have not seen any come near the ancients.'"

literature of the early seventeenth century. One aspect of this literature is of special significance for the history of the epigram: the opening years of the century witnessed, in the works addressed to the masses, a surprising revival of medieval taste as to both subject-matter and treatment. This medieval revival, of which we have already seen an indication in Heywood's return to popularity,[6] was an essential part of the anti-Elizabethan reaction. In fact, from one point of view, it may be scarcely accurate to term that phenomenon a 'reaction'; for the Renaissance had affected so very few people that popular taste had remained untouched: popular literature in the 1590's appealed to the same predilections that it had in the 1560's. Why that taste should have ceased to be insistent, or at least productive of new works, through the seventies and eighties, is a question too large to be considered here. The attractive power of the court, gay with all the new splendors of the Renaissance, may have been great enough to sweep everything along in its train. Or again, the recrudescence of the earlier literary taste may have been due to the recrudescence of those social and economic difficulties which occasioned much of the earlier literature. The last years of Elizabeth's reign were troubled by the same problems that troubled the first years of it—enclosures, vagabondage, pauperism, and the like; and similar conditions might well have given rise to a similar literature. The question is very complicated; but at least the fact is clear that the same medieval or popular tastes which prevailed in the sixties made a remarkable reappearance in the nineties, and in each period are to be regarded rather as survivals of old habits of thought than as deliberate attempts to regenerate a literary past for the sake of novelty.

[6] Heywood, of course, may have been widely read throughout the sixteenth century; but the point is that he exerted little or no influence on mid-Elizabethan literature.

It may be objected that this revival is not medieval, as the literature which it resembles was produced chiefly between 1550 and 1570. It represents, however, a direct inheritance from the Middle Ages, unaffected by the Renaissance; see H. V. Routh, *Camb. Hist. Eng. Lit.*, III, 93.

This important and difficult subject has never been treated adequately. Its relation to the history of prose style, for instance, and to the origins of the essay and of the character, I may cite as illustrations of its far-reaching connections. The drama was somewhat affected, and moral and Biblical plays were produced in some numbers toward the close of the Queen's reign.[7] But the revival is most obvious and unmistakable in prose writings addressed to the multitude. Many of the old literary subjects and forms reappear almost unchanged—the invective against women, the dream-vision, the seven deadly sins, the dance of death, the "flyting," the account of roguery—all were favorites again after 1590.[8] With only two of these revived species are we concerned: the type-satire and the jest book. To the latter the epigram had been intimately related since the days of Sir Thomas More, and the relation was a simple one: the epigrammatist retold in verse a short humorous anecdote, or the author of the jestbook turned such an epigram into prose.

The connection between the epigram and type satire is more complicated. It appeared in the first English epigrams (or what were so termed) to be published; Crowley, as we saw,[9] wrote a series of type satires and called them epigrams. He, however, had no followers. The type satire continued to be written in the traditional forms of the "boats," "testaments," "orders," "fraternities," "dances of death," and the rest, which were known and liked. These productions enjoyed a special vogue during the 1560's; and at the close of the century the same taste revived in force and produced or affected a large body of literature, from the drama to the epigram and the character.

Type portraiture has a wide range and may be undertaken in very different ways. At one extreme stands the depicting of an abstraction such as gluttony or sloth or avarice, as we

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[7] See Schelling, *Eliz. Drama,* I, 41–44.

[8] See H. V. Routh, "London and the Development of Popular Literature," *Camb. Hist. Eng. Lit.,* III, xvi, and especially bibliography, pp. 583–607.

[9] Above, p. 304.

find them represented in the old moralities or drawn for us in the first book of the *Faerie Queene.* At the other extreme stands the caricature of an individual, characterized by insistence on a representative trick or affectation of dress or language. Whether the latter should properly be designated type satire or not may be questioned, but that it is at any rate an outgrowth of the same stem is evident from the history of the drama and of the character.

The comedy of humors is the most conspicuous dramatic manifestation of the taste in question. By "humour" Ben Jonson meant the determining element of personality, which gave a bias to a man's whole character and colored his whole temperament; he used the word somewhat as we use 'disposition' when we speak of a man's having a cheerful, a phlegmatic, or a gloomy disposition. The characters in his comedies, therefore, are often typical individuals, or individualized types. But in common usage and among other dramatists the word was employed to designate any idiosyncrasy or eccentricity, even a mere oddity of speech or clothing, with the result that sometimes the "comedy of humours" degenerated into mere caricature. The result cannot properly be called type satire, because what is satirized is the person's most particular and individual trait. And yet personified abstraction and caricature alike appealed to the same taste for social portrait-painting.

A similar development took place in the character. Theophrastus, the classical model of the character-writers, deals with abstractions such as avarice, boorishness, stupidity, showing how each quality manifests itself in the daily life of a man who possesses it. But from the first the character in England tended to individualization, and we find the process completed in some of the portraits in Earle's *Microcosmographie,* 1628. Overbury's characters (1614) stand about midway; tending to the abstract vice is "A Covetous Man" and to the individual "A Drunken Dutchman resident in England," while most of the portraits fall between these extremes.

The epigram was easily brought under the sway of this taste for portraiture. The result is really a new literary form, something like a brief character in verse with a concluding point of wit. As was pointed out in connection with Crowley, if from the medieval type satire the framework—the "boat," the "fraternity," or what not—be abstracted, the remainder is not unlike a series of epigrams. Whether this process was ever actually and consciously gone through or not is doubtful. The result was probably arrived at simply by giving a slight emphasis and development to an element which had always been present in the epigram. Even Martial, although he seldom or never aims simply at miniature portrait-painting, does nevertheless give us many vivid pictures of individuals, sometimes described at some length. Sir John Davies, who may in this respect have been affected by contemporary taste, often sketches an individual by dwelling on a dominant trait or a mere eccentricity, as in the epigram on Ciprius and his clothes.[10] Here the one characteristic of elegance and neatness in apparel is emphasized, and the result is an individual portrait.

However, Davies has left us a set of type satires of the most generic sort in his *Yet Other Twelve Wonders of the World.*[11] The titles of these twelve wonders are *The Courtier, The Divine, The Soldier, The Lawyer,* and so on. The wonder of it is that the courtier is not a sycophant, that the divine is not worldly, that the soldier is modest, etc. I quote the twelfth:

The Maid

I marriage would forsweare, but that I heare men tell,
That she that dies a maid, must leade an Ape in Hell;
Therefore if fortune come, I will not mock and play,
Nor drive the bargaine on, till it be driven away.
Tithes and lands I like, yet rather fancy can,
A man that wanteth gold, then gold that wants a man.

[10] Epig. 22, quoted above, p. 339.

[11] *Davison's Poetical Rhapsody,* ed. Bullen, I, 6 ff.

This little series is noteworthy for two or three reasons. In the first place, it partakes of the nature of the epigram, being brief and concise; its satiric method is ironic, the obvious implication being that the other members of each class differ so markedly from the one described as to make that one a "wonder." It therefore obviously belongs to the class of type satire. If it has not the traditional framework, at least the pieces are grouped according to a plan. Thus in the work of Sir John Davies are to be found examples of the two extremes of literary portraiture, the most particularized and the most generic.

Most of the epigrammatic writing during the first fifteen years of the seventeenth century we shall find either adhering to this type, somewhere between the two extremes, or else following the jest books. The similar elements of characterization and narration, which are present in epigrams belonging to the classical tradition, are seized upon and given a new turn to fit popular English taste inherited from the Middle Ages.

2. Samuel Rowlands

Of the developments discussed in the preceding section, the work of Samuel Rowlands (1570?–1630?) affords excellent illustrations. Apart from his writings, little or nothing is known concerning this author. He was a popular hack-writer and journalist, and apparently a man of not much education. Of his numerous pamphlets, only two are actually or avowedly composed of epigrams: *The Letting of Humours Blood in the Head-Vaine,* 1600, and *Humors Looking Glasse,* 1608.[12]

Before we take them up, however, it will be worth while to mention *Looke to it: For, Ile Stabbe ye,* 1604.[13] This is a type satire worked into a framework of the dance of death, and is therefore a good instance of the medieval survival, and also, as the following will show, of the close relationship between these older forms and the epigram:

[12] Rowlands' *Works,* ed. E. Gosse, Hunterian Club, *Publ.,* I, nos. 20, 2.
[13] Hunter. Club *Publ.,* I, No. 7.

Counterfayte Captaine

You Captaine mouse-trap, growne a desperat stabber
You that will put your Poniard in mens guts:
You that last Voyage, were no more but swabber,
Yet you cracke Blades as men cracke Hasel-nuts,
You that try all your manhood with a Puncke,
And fight most bravely when you are most drunke:

You that protest the Feather in your Hat,
Came from a Countesse Fanne by way of favour:
Your rapier, why the great Turke gave you that
For mightie monst'rous *Marshal-like* behaviour.
You that weare Scarfs and Gart'rings for your hose,
Made all of Ancients, taken from your foes,
Ile Stab yee.[14]

The other pieces in the series attack similar types. They are not strict epigrams, for they have not complete unity and they are not pointed; but it will be seen that no great deal of working over would make them into a set of epigrams. And, as a matter of fact, they do not differ materially from what Rowlands does choose to term epigrams.

These last belong to two classes, the anecdotal and the descriptive. The former, of course, are related to the jestbooks; one example will suffice:

Epigram

One of these Cuccold-making Queanes
did graft her husbands head:
who arm'd with anger, steele and horne
would kill him stain'd his bed,
And challeng'd him unto the field,
Vowing to have his life,
Where being met, sirha (quoth he,)
I doe suspect my Wife
Is scarce so honest as she should,
You make of her some use:
Indeed said he I love her well,
Ile frame no false excuse.

[14] P. 17.

O! d'ye confesse? by heavens (quoth he)
Had'st thou deni'de thy guilt,
This blade had gone into thy guts,
Even to the verie Hilt.[15]

This type of 'epigram' predominates in *Humors Looking Glasse,* the satiric portrait in *The Letting of Humours Blood.*

Before I discuss Rowlands' epigrams of social satire, I will give two examples, both from *The Letting of Humours Blood:*

Polletique *Peeter* meetes his friend a shore,
That came from Seas but newly tother day:
And gives him French embracements by the score,
Then followes: *Dicke,* Hast made good voyage, say?
But hearing *Richards* shares be poore and sicke,
Peeter ha's haste and cannot drinke with *Dicke.*

Well, then he meetes an other Cavaleere,
Whom he salutes about the Knees and Thighes:
Welcome sweet *James,* now by the Lord what cheere
Ner'e better *Peeter,* We have got riche prize.
Come, come (sayes *Peeter*) ev'en a welcome quart,
For by my fayth, weele drinke before wee part.[16]

Bid me go sleepe? I scorne it with my heeles,
I know my selfe as good a man as thee.
Let goe mine Arme I say, lead him that reeles.
I am a right good fellow; dost thou see?
I know what longes to drinking, and I can
Abuse my selfe as well as any man.

I care no more for twentie hunderd pound,
(Before the Lord) than for a very straw.
Ile fight with any hee above the ground.
Tut, tell not mee whats what; I know the law.
Rapier and Dagger: hey, a kingly fight.
Ile now try falles with any, by this light.[17]

These pieces have several striking features, but none more striking than their dramatic quality. Whatever other education

[15] *Humors Looking Glasse,* p. 8. The same jest is told in a Latin epigram by Sir T. More (Cayley's *Memoirs,* II, 314) and in *A C Mery Talys* (No. 41, *Shakespeare Jest-Books,* ed. Hazlitt, 1st series).

[16] Epig. 11, p. 17.

[17] Epig. 25, p. 31.

Rowlands may have received, he evidently learned much from the Elizabethan theater. He possessed also of course extraordinary powers of observation, but had he not in common with his contemporaries also possessed the dramatic instinct he could hardly have rendered what he saw and heard in just this form. Heywood, it will be remembered, who was a dramatist as well as an epigrammatist, also gives us these vivid bits of monologue and dialogue.

It may be questioned whether Rowlands has any right to the title of epigrammatist except that he assumed it. If we interpret our definition of the epigram at all strictly, he has not. Certainly the foregoing pieces are not "short poems terminating in a point of wit, to which the rest of the composition is intended to lead up." They possess neither the unity nor the terseness which are the marks of an epigram. They are instructive, however, as showing that even in 1600 the general public had no definite conception of the epigram save that it was short; this fact makes plain how little even at that time any true notion of literary forms had spread below the cultivated classes who had some acquaintance with classical literature. It throws light both on the Renaissance and on the medieval revival.

In comparing Rowlands with other epigrammatists, another feature of his work which stands out is its impersonality. Only the educated few in England had yet reached the stage of sophistication at which the writer's personality becomes interesting for itself. The general public did not wish to be informed about Rowlands or his affairs; it wanted pictures of itself. Rowlands filled the rôle of the faithful photographer admirably. We learn much of London from him, nothing of himself. He does not even use the first person. This again may be related to his dramatic instinct, that he was able to exclude himself so successfully from his work.

His style is conversation put into feet and rime. It is marked by extreme fluency and ease. If he ever heard of the "colors of rhetoric," he made no use of them. Here again he was

probably in accord with popular taste. But concision and point, the two qualities most necessary to an epigrammatic style, were those he particularly lacked.

Has he then nothing in common with the epigrammatists? With Martial he shares one trait, and one only—his interest in city life. He uses the same material as the epigrammatists. With his immediate English predecessors, he has more points of contact. To be sure, he makes no pretense to moral fervor or to any purpose of reforming the age, at least in his epigrams. His work more nearly resembles that of Sir John Davies than that of any other previous writer of epigrams.

In the material they use and in their style Davies and Rowlands are not dissimilar, though Davies makes some use of rhetoric and ends his epigrams with a point, and also introduces himself more than does Rowlands. But the distinction to be drawn between their methods of portraiture is less obvious. Davies emphasizes a single manifestation of a single trait or eccentricity and uses the method of description. Rowlands on the other hand lets the peculiar quality of the man he is portraying manifest itself in action and speech; his method is dramatic rather than descriptive—see for instance how he brings out the "policy" of "polletique Peeter" and the quarrelsomeness of the drunken brawler in the verses quoted. Of course many of Davies' epigrams do not contain even incidental character-sketching, whereas Rowlands confines himself to humorous anecdote and to the satiric portrait.

Rowlands' work illustrates perfectly for us the popular as opposed to the classical epigram—if we may loosely term his compositions epigrams. He shows us how the medieval revival affected the epigram, or, to put the matter more exactly, how the epigram affected the medieval revival. If there had been no imitators of Martial, Rowlands would not have produced his so-called epigrams; he would have confined himself to the familiar and traditional forms such as the dance of death, which he also uses. He has taken a suggestion from the elements of

anecdote and character-study which enter into the true epigram, he has abstracted those elements and adapted them to the popular taste for funny stories and social portraits, and the result is a form which, however remote from the classical epigram, is still not entirely disconnected from it.[18]

3. John Davies of Hereford and Others

The work of John Davies of Hereford stands midway between the classical and the wholly popular epigram. He was not a man of education or social position. He was born about 1565; he lived for a time in Oxford, not, however, as a member of the university, but as a teacher of penmanship. He later pursued the same calling in London, where, in spite of recognition as an excellent instructor, he found it difficult to earn a living.[19] In *The Scourge of Folly,* 1610–1611,[20] he published 292 epigrams. His work is naturally affected by his social and intellectual status. It belongs to popular literature, but is closer than that of Rowlands to the epigrams of the 1590's. In only one case does Davies borrow from Martial.[21]

Almost all Davies' work is devoted to eulogy and social satire. The laudatory epigrams are of interest only because they show that he was familiar with the earlier English epigrammatists, Sir John Davies,[22] Harington,[23] and Bastard,[24] as well as with Heywood, his relation to whom will be be discussed presently. The purpose of the satiric portion of the volume is sufficiently

[18] The extent of Rowlands' resemblance and indebtedness to Heywood is an interesting question which I cannot take up, save to point out the presence in the work of both of them of the anecdote and the dramatic method.

[19] See article by Bullen in *D. N. B.* for Davies of Hereford's life.

[20] *The Scourge of Folly. Consisting of satyricall Epigramms, and others in honor of many noble and worthy persons of our Land. Together, With a pleasant (though discordant) Descant upon most English Proverbes: and others.* Davies' *Complete Works,* ed. A. B. Grosart, *Chertsey Worthies Lib.,* II. It was entered on the Stationers' Register in October, 1610 (Alden, *Rise of Satire,* p. 174).

[21] Epig. 224, from Mar. II 53.

[22] See p. 53.

[23] Epigs. 124, 191, pp. 52, 62. Epig. 191 may refer to Mar. III 20.

[24] Epig. 106, an elaboration of Bastard vii 40.

indicated by the title. The alleged reformatory intention, though doubtless a mere literary convention, is to some extent borne out by the savageness of most of the satire. Davies deals in abuse and invective, not in irony. He attacks typical individuals for their sins and vices—lechery, gluttony, avarice, and the like. Sometimes he ridicules a mere eccentricity or oddity, but more commonly he reprehends graver faults. A few but not many of his epigrams have some of the narrative element and verge on anecdotes. The important features that distinguish his work are exemplified in the following:

Epigram 88

Jovius will jest, but can abide no jesting;
And loves mens wives but would have none love his:
He loathes to feast, and yet he smells out feasting,
Nor spend himself but others spoyle he is.
O honyed humor! who will Jovius blame
To love himself, sith none els doth the same.

Epigram 17

Daccus is all bedaub'd with golden lace,
Hose, doublet, jerkins, and gamashes too;
Yet is he foolish, rude and beastly-base;
Crowes like a cocke, but like a craven does;
Then hee's (to prise him nought his worth beneath)
A leaden rapier in a golden sheath.

Epigram 147

Mandrus is risen mightilie of late,
He gets the devill and all, by giving daie;
Gets he by giving? a plague on his pate
He giveth nought but that which will not stay:
That's staylesse time, which he doth precious hold,
And sels a little for no little gold.

The first, Epigram 88, illustrates Davies' method of portraiture. He brings out one trait indicated succinctly in several manifestations, and concludes with a point. In this case, he is dealing with a humor in the Jonsonian sense, a bias which warps a man's whole nature, but he often describes less fundamental

characteristics, such as Daccus' love of gold lace in Epigram 17. Sir John Davies, we saw, was inclined to dwell on a single manifestation of a single quality, as vanity manifesting itself in dress; Davies of Hereford, on the other hand, tends to more general description and uses much the same method as the character-writers. Davies of Hereford had little of the dramatic quality of Rowlands.

Various minor features of the preceding epigrams are characteristic of the author. The contrast which is used in Epigrams 88 and 17, quoted above, is found throughout his work, and a metaphorical antithesis such as the one with which he ends Epigram 17 is a favorite point with him. Epigram 147 furnishes an excellent example of Davies' constant habit of playing with words. Punning and the sort of antithesis mentioned are as near as he comes to making any use of formal rhetoric, though the rhetorical questions in 88 and 147 ought to be pointed out in this connection. In general, his style is rough, without the fluency and ease of Sir John Davies and Rowlands. He has much in common with Bastard; their satiric epigrams are especially alike, but Bastard has a smaller proportion of such epigrams and much more variety in his work. Both writers often introduce themselves into their work. In short, what distinguishes Davies from the earlier epigrammatists is that he makes little or no use of Martial, and that the satiric portrait, especially of the social type, figures so preponderantly in his work. Otherwise, he marks a continuation and degeneration of the tradition established in the 1590's, with a trend to satiric type-pictures induced by the medieval revival.

Davies of Hereford shows the effect of the return to favor of the popular literature of the middle of the sixteenth century in the use he makes of Heywood. His *Descant upon English Proverbes* is imitated from Heywood's *Epigrams upon Proverbs.* It begins with an address to Heywood

"That yet with Booke-sellers, as new, doth remaine."[25]

[25] p. 41.

There follow 418 proverbs treated in Heywood's manner, so that each forms an epigram, thus:

5. 'Little or nothing said soon mended is:'
   But they that nothing do, do most amisse.
65. 'Fooles make the banquets, and wise men enjoy them:'
   So at Fooles wassells wise men destroy them.

In addition to the *Descant, Epigrams* 129–142, "In contradiction of some adages," and 172–174, are reminiscent of Heywood:

Epigram 172

Where now lies Mustolphus? Everie where: Why?
Wheresoever he goes he doth nothing but lye.

It will be seen that Davies has succeeded perfectly in catching Heywood's manner and the lilt of his verse, the "tumbling metre." Bastard, we saw, also parodied Heywood, and he may have given a suggestion to Davies. Davies' testimony to the effect that Heywood was still selling as well as new books is especially significant of the old epigrammatist's long-lived popularity, and of how little the taste of most Englishmen had changed in half a century.

Our three remaining authors, John Taylor the Water-Poet,[26] Richard Brathwaite,[27] and William Goddard,[28] bring nothing

[26] *Taylors Water-Worke,* etc., 1612, Spenser Soc. *Publ.,* reprint of folio of 1630, pp. 497 ff. *The Nipping or Snipping of Abuses,* 1614, pp. 383 ff.

[27] *A Strappado for the Divell,* 1615, ed. J. W. Ebsworth, a volume of miscellaneous verse, some satirical, some descriptive of types (e.g., the Precisian, the Church-Knight, etc.). It belongs to the same class as Rowlands' work, dealing in character-sketches and anecdotes. The word "epigram" is misapplied, being used indiscriminately with "satire" and "emblem"; many of the 'epigrams' are several pages long. Brathwaite was a man of education, having attended both Oxford and Cambridge (see article by E. Gosse, *D. N. B.*); his main interests seem to have been religious and scholarly.

[28] *Neaste of Waspes* . . . Dort, 1615; ed. C. H. Wilkinson, 1921. *Mastif Whelpe* . . . n.d. Of Goddard nothing is known save what he tells us in his books; he seems to have been a soldier—not an officer—in the Low Countries, and he dedicates the *Mastif Whelpe* to some gentlemen of the Inner Temple. His epigrams belong to the popular tradition with those of Rowlands in *Humors Looking Glasse.* They have special affinity with the jestbooks, consisting for the most part of "merry tales, witty questions, and quick answers."

new into the English epigram. Taylor, who came of humble parentage, was a waterman on the Thames by vocation, and by avocation a popular humorist. Except that his work is less dramatic, it is much like that of Rowlands, abounding in "merry jests" and descriptions of the lighter humors of the metropolis. I quote one of his epigrams:

> Signeor *Serano* to and fro doth range
> And at high Noone he visits the Exchange:
> With stately gate the peopled Burse he stalkes,
> Prying for some acquaintance in those walkes;
> Which if he spye, note but his strange salute,
> Marke how he'l spread to shew his broaking sute,
> When he perhaps that ow'd that cast apparell,
> Not a fortnight since at *Tyborne* fought a quarrell.[29]

In his graphic and detailed accounts of passing fashions and habits he is a popular successor of Sir John Davies.

When we find the epigram in the hands of such men as Rowlands and Taylor, we know that it has fallen even from the not over-exalted position it held under Sir John Davies and Harington. It makes no more pretense to literary merit than the funny page of the modern Sunday supplement. It possesses more merit, of course, for the reason that such pamphleteers as we have been discussing often displayed no mean gifts, especially of graphic description of London life. But they aimed simply to earn a living by amusing the public; they did not pose as literary artists bent on advancing English letters. Their interest is that they show us what the public liked; and their value is not exclusively sociological. It is an aid to the understanding of the course of English literature to see how the epigram begins, in Heywood and Crowley, with a popular appeal, and how one stage of its history ends, over half a century later, with the same appeal to almost the same taste. We see how great was the inertia of the English people in literary matters. But it would not be true to say that no change has come over the epigram between 1550 and 1615. Had there been no imitators

[29] *Water-Worke*, p. 507.

of Martial, the pamphleteers would probably not have written epigrams at all, nor exhibited the merits they do of graphic description, of social portraiture in miniature. The models of form supplied by the epigrammatists of the nineties were not wholly without avail.

The popular epigram continued after 1615, but its heyday was past. There would be little profit in pursuing its course further. When Ben Jonson published his folio in 1616, the English epigram made another fresh start, and this time it arrived. Jonson established it as a permanent literary form in good standing. Jonson's work, therefore, is of the utmost importance in the history of the English epigram.

CHAPTER V

BEN JONSON

To the best of our knowledge, Ben Jonson first published his epigrams in the folio of 1616, although the Stationers' Register has an entry of a volume of epigrams by him in the year 1612. If it was ever published, this book is not now extant. Most of the epigrams we can date fall in the ten years preceding the publication of the folio. Inasmuch as the author, in his dedicatory epistle to the Earl of Pembroke, refers to them as "the ripest of my studies," we may assume that the majority of them had been composed within the previous decade. In the collection called *Underwoods* and first printed in the folio of 1641, there are also a number of epigrams.[1]

The phrase, "the ripest of my studies," shows that Jonson did not regard his epigrams with the lightness which his predecessors had displayed toward their work. We could infer as much from internal evidence in the epigrams themselves, from the obvious pains which the author has taken with them. But he also asserts in other places his sense of the dignity of his epigrams, as in No. 17, *To the Learned Critic:*

> May others fear, fly, and traduce thy name,
> As guilty men do magistrates: glad I,
> That wish my poems a legitimate fame,
> Charge them, for crown, to thy sole censure hie, etc.

In recommending them to the King in Epigram 4, Jonson makes clear that to his mind the epigram is a form of poetry as worthy as any other of serious art and serious criticism. Thus the first divergence which we find in Jonson from earlier English practice is in his attitude toward his work.

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[1] References are to Jonson's *Works*, ed. W. Gifford, re-ed. F. Cunningham, 3 vols., 1897. The *Epigrams* are in III, 224 ff.; *Underwoods*, III, 277 ff.

But that is not the only nor indeed the most important difference. Jonson held a low opinion of his predecessors. Some of his criticism of them has come down to us. He disapproved of the narrative element which we have found characteristic of most English epigrammatists, and which differentiates them from Martial. Drummond records of Jonson: "That when Sir John Harington desyred him to tell the truth of his Epigrames, he answered him, that he loved not the truth, for they were narrations, and not Epigrames."[2] And again: "Owen . . . hath no thinge good in him, his Epigrames being bare narrations."[3] Jonson also realized that previous English epigrams had left too little to the reader's imagination, that what they should have hinted at, implied, suggested ironically, they put into terms of direct abuse; here again his theory holds with the practice of Martial rather than of his fellow-countrymen. Drummond has also recorded this opinion of his: "A great many epigrams were ill, because they expressed in the end what should have been understood by what was said. That of S. Joh. Davies, 'Some loved running verses,' *plus mihi complacet.*"[4] And finally, in his eighteenth epigram Jonson flatly expresses his adverse opinion of his predecessors:

To my mere English Censurer
To thee, my way in Epigrams seems new,
When both it is the old way, and the true.
Thou sayst that cannot be; for thou hast seen
Davies and Weever, and the best have been,
And mine come nothing like. I hope so, . . . etc.[5]

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[2] *Convers.* iii.

[3] *Ibid.*, xii.

[4] *Convers.* xv. I cannot find the epigram of Davies to which Jonson here refers; it apparently has not survived. It must, however, have been a satiric piece which damned, not outright but by indirection. Jonson refers in *Conv.* xii to Davies' Epig. 25 and in *Conv.* xviii to Davies, perhaps Epig. 8.

[5] Whalley identified the Davies here referred to with Davies of Hereford, no doubt correctly as Jonson's references to Sir John Davies are approving.

For Jonson's disapproval of earlier epigrammatists, see also III, 398, *Censura de poetis* in *Discoveries,* an ironical discussion of the popularity of the worst poets: "Heath's epigrams and the Sculler's poems have their applause."

Jonson, then, in forming his theory of the epigram, was not a follower of any other English epigrammatist. He derived it for himself from his study of the classics, and especially of Martial. Believing as he did that English literature must go to school to the classics, illustrating this theory by his own practice throughout his whole career, he fashioned his own canon of the epigram—but with complete critical and intelligent independence—from the work of the Roman master of the species. Jonson had a high admiration for Martial. Drummond notes: "He recommended to my reading . . . Martiall; whose Epigrame *Vitam quae faciunt beatiorem,* &c., he hath translated."[6] He also told Drummond that Martial was "for delight," and he "had ever in his mouth:

> Turpe est difficiles amare nugas,
> Et stultus labor est ineptiarum."[7]

Jonson also quotes with some frequency from Martial, or refers to him, in the *Discoveries.*[8] But the truest estimate of his attitude toward Martial is to be got from the epigrams themselves.

Of Jonson's theory of the epigram, Gifford says: "It may be necessary to admonish the reader not to take up these poems with the general expectation of finding them terminate in a point of wit. This, indeed, is the modern construction of the word; but it was never Jonson's: by Epigram he meant nothing more than a short poem, chiefly restricted to one idea, and equally adapted to the delineation and expression of every

[6] *Convers.* ii; for this trans., see III, 388.

[7] *Convers.* ix, xvii; Mar. II 86. Cf. *Execration upon Vulcan,* p. 320:

> Had I compiled from Amadis de Gaul, . . .
> Or spun out riddles, or weaved fiftey tomes
> Of logographes, or curious Palindromes,
> Or pumped for those hard trifles, Anagrams,
> Or Eteostics, or those finer flams
> Of eggs and halberds, cradles, and a herse,
> A pair of scisars, and a comb in verse;
> Acrosticks, and telestichs on jump names,
> Thou then hadst had some colour for thy flames.

[8] Ed M. Castelain, Paris, 1906. In 36, Mar. I 107; in 48, Mar. I 86; in 63, Mar. IV 10; in 65 and in 137, Mar. XI 90; in 129, Mar. VII 98 and VIII 19.

passion incident to human life. The work is, in short, an Anthology, and may occasionally remind those who are studious of antiquity, of the collections which pass under that name.''[9]

Whence Gifford derived this notion I cannot say. Jonson's epigrams do not portray ''every passion incident to human life.'' On the contrary, they are even more closely limited as to theme than Martial's. And if, in his last sentence, Gifford refers to the Greek Anthology, he is in error, for Jonson's collection is not similar to it. The themes of love and mythology, the humorous anecdotes, the descriptions of works of art, for instance, are altogether absent; and other differences could be pointed out at will, were that necessary. As for the matter of the point of wit, Gifford's statement requires qualification. If by that expression he means mere ingenious conceits and quips, it is true that Jonson does not deal in these things. On the other hand, although it is true they do not depend on mere ingenuity, the majority of Jonson's epigrams are as a matter of fact pointed, in that the idea is incomplete until we reach the last line, which either sums up and so points what has gone before, or gives a new and unexpected turn to the whole thought. In short, the bulk of Jonson's epigrams, like the bulk of Martial's, fall within the modern definition of the word *epigram.*

In taking up Jonson's specific borrowings from Martial and in offering definite parallels from the work of the two men, I shall discuss their general resemblances, first in subject matter and then in form. Out of the seven classes of epigram among which Martial's work is distributed, there is only one which is not to be found in Jonson's epigrams: the *jeux d'esprit* on pets, works of art, and the like. As these are among the lightest and least serious of Martial's compositions, it is characteristic of Jonson's greater earnestness that he did not in this respect follow Martial's lead. This divergence is typical of the difference between the two men.

Jonson wrote many epigrams of praise, and some of flattery, the latter being addressed to King James; but he is unlike

[9] III 224.

Martial in that he sincerely admired the objects of his eulogy and that for the most part they were worthy of admiration, although we cannot accept Jonson's statements as always literally true. At least one cannot accuse Jonson of the subservience of which one cannot acquit Martial; Jonson had a spirit of independence, and even his flattery is a free-will offering and to be taken not as statement of fact, but as well-turned compliment. Epigram 36, *To the Ghost of Martial,* in spite of Jonson's denial, is as neat as any epigram addressed by Martial to Domitian:

> Martial, thou gav'st far nobler Epigrams
> To thy Domitian, than I can my James;
> But in my royal subject I pass thee,
> Thou flatter'dst thine, mine cannot flattered be.

Like Martial, Jonson often addresses his friends and patrons, for the most part noblemen and authors. He expresses his friendship for them, he praises their character and ability, he sends them good advice, all in Martial's manner. In particular, his Epigram 96, *To John Donne,* invites comparison with Martial's compliment to Apollinaris in the address to his book, IV 86:

> Who shall doubt, Donne, where I a poet be,
> When I dare send my epigrams to thee?
> That so alone canst judge, so alone dost make:
> And in thy censures evenly dost take
> As free simplicity to disavow,
> As thou hast best authority t'allow.
> Read all I send; and if I find but one
> Marked by thy hand, and with the better stone,
> My title's sealed. Those that for claps do write,
> Let pui'nees', porters', players' praise delight,
> And till they burst their backs like asses load:
> A man should seek great glory, and not broad.

Martial IV 86

> Si vis auribus Atticis probari,
> exhortor moneoque te, libelle,
> ut docto placeas Apollinari.
> nil exactius eruditiusque est,
> sed nec candidius benigniusque.

Jonson's Epigram 101, *Inviting a Friend to Supper,* is an imitation of Martial X 48, especially in the concluding lines:

> Nor shall our cups make any guilty men:
> But at our parting, we will be as when
> We innocently met. No simple word
> That shall be uttered at our mirthful board,
> Shall make us sad next morning; or affright
> The liberty that we'll enjoy tonight.[10]

> accedent sine felle ioci nec mane timenda
> libertas et nil quod tacuisse velis:
> de prasino conviva meus venetoque loquatur,
> nec faciunt quemquam pocula nostra reum.

There is less of this sort of thing in Jonson than in Martial; we hear much less, for instance, of gifts and benefactions; yet in general it is true, not only that Jonson often addresses friends and patrons, but that he does so in Martial's manner. In this respect he is closer to Martial than is any other English writer we have mentioned.

A few of Jonson's epigrams are gnomic and reflective, but as a rule his aphorisms and generalities are worked in as conclusions to pieces of other sorts, as in the final verse of Epigram 96, just quoted. In Epigram 70, *To William Roe,* however, Jonson gives advice in precisely Martial's Epicurean strain:

> When nature bids us leave to live, 'tis late
> Then to begin, my Roe! He makes a state
> In life that can employ it; and takes hold
> On the true causes, ere they grow too old.
> Delay is bad, doubt worse, depending worst;
> Each best day of our life escapes us first:
> Then since we, more than many, these truths know;
> Though life be short, let us not make it so.[11]

Just so speaks Martial to his friends Julius and Postumus:

> non est, crede mihi, sapientis dicere 'Vivam':
> sera nimis vita est crastina: vive hodie;[12]

[10] Gifford also quotes parallels from Juvenal and Horace for other parts of this epigram.

[11] Gifford notes that the sixth line is from Virgil,

> Optima quaeque dies miseris mortalibus aevi
> Prima fugit.

[12] I 15, final couplet.

> Cras te victurum, cras dicis, Postume, semper.
> dic mihi, cras istud, Postume, quando venit? . . .
> cras vives? hodie iam vivere, Postume, serum est:
> ille sapit quisquis, Postume, vixit heri.[13]

It is noteworthy also that the two epigrams of Martial which Jonson chose for translation[14] are both of this sort, Epicurean philosophizings. And yet we know that Jonson was not himself a real Epicurean; on the contrary, he aimed at a sort of Christian Stoicism. It is natural therefore that most of his sententious verses should be not such as the preceding, but more in the strain of Epigram 34, *Of Death:*

> He that fears Death, or mourns it, in the just,
> Shows of the Resurrection little trust.

Though he did not seriously accept the frivolous and cynical hedonism which satisfied Martial, no doubt his bohemian temperament and way of life led him to understand and to sympathize with that point of view. The fact that he was specially attracted by Martial's reflections on the theme *Carpe diem* shows a bond of union between the two men.

The strongest link between them, however, is their common love of the country and of country life. This appears not so much in Jonson's epigrams as in his epistles. *To Sir Robert Wroth,* No. 3 in *The Forest,* should be compared with Martial I 49 and 55, for general resemblance. In *To Penshurst,* No. 2 in *The Forest,* the likeness to Martial is closer; this poem is in fact an expansion and adaptation of Martial's description, III 58, of Faustinus' Baian villa, and in spite of the fact that it is not an epigram, I quote two parallel passages:

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[13] V 58.

[14] *Works,* III, 388; from Martial VIII 77, to Liber, telling him to enjoy himself, and X 47, the familiar *Vitam quae faciunt beatiorem.* The former was in the 1640 folio; the latter is presumably the translation to which Drummond refers, *Convers.* ii. Of it Cunningham says: "The above verses were discovered by Mr. Collier at Dulwich in Jonson's handwriting. . . . Mr. Collier printed them in his *Memoirs of Edward Alleyn,* p. 54."

et dona matrum vimine offerunt texto
grandes proborum virgines colonorum.
facto vocatur laetus opere vicinus;
nec avara servat crastinas dapes mensa,
vescuntur omnes ebrioque non novit
satur minister invidere convivae:

. . . some that think they make
The better cheeses, bring them; or else send
By their ripe daughters, whom they would commend
This way to husbands; and whose baskets bear
An emblem of themselves in plum or pear . . .
Here no man tells my cups; nor standing by,
A waiter, doth my gluttony envy;
But gives me what I call, and lets me eat,
He knows below he shall find plenty of meat;
Thy tables hoard not up for the next day.

Martial X 30

Si quando Nereus sentit Aeoli regnum,
ridet procellas tuta de suo mensa:
piscina rhombum pascit et lupos vernas,
natat ad magistrum delicata murena,
nomenculator mugilem citat notum
et adesse iussi prodeunt senes mulli.

And if the high-swoln Medway fail thy dish,
Thou hast thy ponds, that pay thee tribute fish,
Fat aged carps run into thy net,
And pikes, now weary their own kind to eat,
As loth the second cast or draught to stay,
Officiously at first themselves betray.

In both Martial and Jonson is found the city-dweller's love of the country, heightened by distance and contrast; yet in both the real country is described, no fantastic and conventional Arcadia. This devotion to the country, which joins him to Martial, is typical of Jonson's whole time; the Elizabethan pastoral has passed away, and men are turning to the reality, to retirement in semi-solitude as a relief from social contacts which have come to seem oppressive. It was part of the anti-Elizabethan reaction that men, dismayed by the failure of the

Renaissance ideal, should shun the court and the city in an effort to find themselves and arrive at a satisfactory working philosophy of life. In the sentiment for the country, then, which he shares with Martial, Jonson is typical of his age; and here we find another reason for Martial's popularity among the anti-Elizabethans.

In the writing of epitaphs, Jonson has equaled, if he has not surpassed, Martial in Martial's own best vein. The pathos and the tenderness in both poets is exquisite; but Jonson has more sincerity and more depth of feeling. Martial nowhere exhibits the strength of restrained emotion that is felt in Jonson's lines *On my First Son,* Epigram 45:

> . . . O, could I lose all father, now! for why
> Will man lament the state he should envy?
> To have so soon scaped world's and flesh's rage,
> And if no other misery, yet age!
> Rest in soft peace, and asked, say here doth lie
> Ben Jonson his best piece of Poetry:
> For whose sake henceforth all his vows be such,
> As what he loves may never like too much.

Yet even in these lines of obvious sincerity, Jonson has borrowed from Martial's epitaph on the boy-slave Glaucias, which concludes:

> quidquid amas, cupias non placuisse nimis.[15]

Almost as pretty an instance of how literary reminiscence may be used to express true feeling is found in Jonson's exquisite epitaph on Salathiel Pavy, Epigram 120, in which he parallels a couplet from Martial, X 53, on Scorpus, the young charioteer:

> invida quem Lachesis raptum trieteride nona,
> dum numerat palmas, credidit esse senem:
>
> Years he numbered scarce thirteen
> When Fates turned cruel,
> Yet three filled zodiacs had he been
> The stage's jewel;

[15] VI 29; Gifford cites as parallel Martial XII 34:
Nulli te facias nimis sodalem,
Gaudebis minus, at minus dolebis.

And did act, what now we moan,
Old men so duly,
As, sooth, the Parcae thought him one,
He played so truly.[16]

Jonson excludes the theme of love from his epigrams even more rigidly than Martial, presumably thinking it subject for lyric, not for epigrammatic treatment. In two of his lyrics he has borrowed from Martial: "If I freely may discover" in *The Poetaster*[17] and "Do but look on her eyes! they do light!" in *The Devil is an Ass.*[18] It is symptomatic of the narrowing of the range of the epigram that Jonson should reserve the more poetic emotions for non-epigrammatic treatment.

It is, however, naturally in his satire that Jonson has most followed Martial, for the bulk of the work of both men is satiric. Jonson in general is more serious than Martial in his satire and adopts a somewhat less indulgent tone, as he had a right to do. His subject-matter is also different, for England was less corrupt than first-century Rome; so that what seems the rule in Martial's environment seems the exception in Jonson's. Furthermore, it must be admitted that Jonson's sturdy manliness makes his collection less interesting than that of the more sprightly and flexible Spaniard. While picturesque detail is by no means lacking in Jonson's work, nevertheless it will not be asserted by any one that it paints so vivid and complete a picture of contemporary London as Martial gives us of his Rome. Jonson's epigrams have not the variety of Martial's; he touches fewer aspects of the life about him, and his treatment is not so varied. But on the other hand, we must remember that Martial's epigrams represent a life-work; whereas Jonson's great contribution was to the English drama.

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[16] Cf. also Jonson, Epig. 22, *On my First Daughter,* with Martial's epitaph on Erotion, V 34, especially the last line:

Which cover lightly, gentle earth!

This thought of course was common property; yet it serves to point a general resemblance.

[17] Act II, sc. 1, *Works,* I, 221; Martial I 57.

[18] Act II, sc. 2, *Works,* II, 238; Martial I 115, V 37.

Within these limits, however—and they must not be over-stressed—Jonson gives a picture of London which is a fairly adequate counterpart to Martial's picture of Rome. Jonson satirizes doctors, newsmongers, alchemists, braggarts, unworthy soldiers, the hangers-on of the court, fops, "gulls," and gallants; he attacks hypocrisy, fraud, vice, and affectation. In all this he draws surprisingly little direct from Martial. One of the epigrams in which he has followed Martial is worth quoting in full, as an illustration both of Jonson's satire and of his method of adaptation:

To Mime, Epigram 129

That not a pair of friends each other see,
But the first question is, When one saw thee?
That there's no journey set or thought upon,
To Braynford, Hackney, Bow, but thou mak'st one;
That scarce the town designeth any feast
To which thou'rt not a week bespoke a guest;
That still thou'rt made the supper's flag, the drum,
The very call, to make all others come:
Think'st thou, Mime, this is great? or that they strive
Whose noise shall keep thy miming most alive,
Whilst thou dost raise some player from the grave,
Out-dance the Babion, or out-boast the Brave;
Or, mounted on a stool, thy face doth hit
On some new gesture that's imputed wit?
O, run not proud of this. Yet take thy due.
Thou dost out-zany Cokely, Pod; nay, Gue:
And thine own Coryat too; but, wouldst thou see,
Men love not thee for this; they laugh at thee.

This is a much more vivid and graphic working over of Martial VII 76; all the local allusions which make the piece effective have been added by Jonson, who always imitates with originality and independence:

Quod te diripiunt potentiores
per convivia, porticus, theatra,
et tecum, quotiens ita incidisti,
gestari iuvat et iuvat lavari:
nolito nimium tibi placere.
delectas, Philomuse, non amaris.

Very similar is Jonson's reworking, in Epigram 107, *To Captain Hungry,* of Martial IX 35, both on newsmongers who earned their dinners by inventing strange tales. The central portion, which retails the offered news, Jonson has adapted to current conditions; but the beginning and the end afford close parallels:

> Do what you come for, captain, with your news;
> That's sit and eat; do not my ears abuse . . .
> Come, be not angry, you are Hungry; eat:
> Do what you come for, captain; there's your meat.

> Artibus his semper cenam, Philomuse, mereris,
> plurima dum fingis, sed quasi vera refers . . .
> Tolle tuas artes; hodie cenabis apud me
> hac lege, ut narres nil, Philomuse, novi.[19]

Many of Jonson's satiric epigrams have to do with his own work; he attacks his critics and censurers again and again, and assaults his plagiarists. In these pieces he draws more heavily on Martial than in his epigrams of general social satire. Epigram 56, *On Poet-Ape,* is reminiscent of Martial I 53; both are on plagiarists whose thefts stand out in contrast to their own work. Compare especially Jonson's couplet,

> Fool! as if half eyes will not know a fleece
> From locks of wool, or shreds from the whole piece?

with Martial's lines:

> sic interpositus villo contaminat uncto
> urbica Longonicus Tyrianthina bardocucullus,
> sic Arretinae violant crystallina testae, etc.[20]

More interesting in this connection is Jonson's Epigram 112, which is an obvious imitation of Martial XII 94, as the following passages will show:

> Scribebamus epos; coepisti scribere: cessi,
> aemula ne starent carmina nostra tuis.
> transtulit ad tragicos se nostra Thalia cothurnos:
> aptasti longum tu quoque syrma tibi.

[19] One other parallel in the satiric epigram may be pointed out: Jonson, 117; Martial XII 16.

[20] See also Martial X 100.

fila lyrae movi Calabris exculta Camenis:
plectra rapis nobis, ambitiose, nova.
audemus saturas: Lucilius esse laboras.
ludo levis elegos: tu quoque ludis idem.
quid minus esse potest? epigrammata fingere coepi:
hinc etiam petitur iam mea palma tibi.

I cannot for the stage a Drama lay,
Tragic or comic, but thou writ'st the play.
I leave thee there, and giving way, intend
An Epic poem; thou hast the same end.
I modestly quit that, and think to write,
Next morn an Ode; thou mak'st a song ere night.
I pass to elegies; thou meet'st me there;
To Satires; and thou dost pursue me. Where,
Where shall I scape thee? in an Epigram?
O, thou cry'st out, that is my proper game.[21]

So far as the contents and the types of Jonson's epigrams go, Jonson has followed Martial but has not hesitated to alter his models to make them fit the circumstances in which he was writing. Jonson's collection, in short, is a seventeenth-century English counterpart to Martial's work in respect to kinds of epigram and to subject-matter. Much the same statement may be made as to Jonson's form. It follows Martial's lead, but is affected by Jonson's personality and by the time in which he lived.

In structure, Jonson's epigrams may be said on the whole to be less elaborately wrought out than Martial's. And yet Jonson is careful of his structure, more careful and more like Martial than any of his English predecessors. All but a few of his epigrams fall into well-defined portions of exposition and conclusion, often with a brief transition between. In his use of indirect quotation as a means of introduction, of question and answer for leading up to the point, of rhetorical question alone as a conclusion, he is like Martial. Of his shorter pieces the following will serve as examples:

[21] Two other parallels of this type are to be mentioned. Jonson, Epigram 77, follows Martial V 60; and *To a Friend. An epigram of Inigo Jones* is an adaptation of Martial XII 61. The latter is to be found in *Works*, III, 212, first printed, according to Gifford, in Whalley's *Jonson*, 1756.

On Cheveril, Epigram 54

Cheveril cries out my verses libels are;
And threatens the Star-chamber, and the Bar.
What are thy petulant pleadings, Cheveril, then,
That quit'st the cause so oft, and rail'st at men?

Here the first couplet contains an indirect quotation in the third person which gives the occasion, and the second couplet in a rhetorical question gives the author's comment.

On Playwright, Epigram 68

Playwright convict of public wrongs to men,
Takes private beatings, and begins again.
Two kinds of valour he doth show at once;
Active in's brain, and passive in his bones.

Like the preceding, this epigram opens with a couplet of exposition; then comes a line of transition, leading to the author's comment, which contains the point. Only one qualification needs to be made if these are to be taken as typical: that Jonson makes a very large use of the second person, beginning many of his epigrams with a statement addressed to his victim.

In some of his more elaborately constructed epigrams Jonson closely resembles Martial. In the following, for instance, the use of the second person, of question and quotation with comment and answer, is admirably calculated to give that air of casual conversation worked into artistic form which distinguishes Martial's work:

To Sir Annual Tilter, Epigram 29

Tilter, the most may admire thee, though not I;
And thou, right guiltless, mayst plead to it, Why?
For thy late sharp device. I say 'tis fit
All brains, at times of triumph, should run wit:
For then our water-conduits do run wine;
But that's put in, thou'lt say. Why, so is thine.

Jonson's reservation here of the point until the very end is especially like Martial.

Two special elcments in construction which we found characteristic of Martial are also common in Jonson's work. The first of these is the habit of opening an epigram with an apostrophe or an exclamation. The other, which is much more common in Jonson than in Martial, is the device of building the whole epigram out of an cnumeration.[22] I quote a striking instance:

On Giles and Joan, Epigram 42

Who says that Giles and Joan at discord be?
Th' observing neighbours no such mood can see.
Indeed, poor Giles repents he married ever;
But that his Joan doth too. And Giles would never,
By his free-will, be in Joan's company:
No more would Joan he should. Giles riseth early,
And having got him out of doors is glad;
The like is Joan: but turning home is sad:
And so is Joan. Ofttimes when Giles doth find
Harsh sights at home, Giles wisheth he were blind;
All this doth Joan: or that his long-yarned life
Were quite out-spun; the like wish hath his wife.
The children that he keeps, Giles swears are none
Of his begetting; and so swears his Joan.
In all affections she concurreth still.
If now, with man and wife, to will and nill
The self-same things a note of concord be,
I know no couple better can agree![23]

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[22] For examples, see above, Epigs. 129, 112, 107, pp. 394–396. Epigram 28, *On Don Surly,* is a description by enumeration of a "great man," after Martial's description of a "bellus homo," III 63; it also contains parallels to lines in Martial I 9, I 4.

[23] Cf. Martial VIII 35 (quoted above, p. 307), with a similar epigram by Heywood). Jonson's immediate original was not Martial but Parkhurst, a translation of whose epigram is given by Kendall, *Flowers of Epigrammes,* Spenser Soc. *Publ.,* p. 207. I quote the first lines of Kendall's version:

Seldome doth Lollus dyne at home,
and not against his will:
And that he seld may dine at home,
Caecilian wisheth still. . . .
Seldome doth Lollus sleepe at home,
and not against his will:
And that he seld may sleepe at home
Caecilian wisheth still.
Seldome speakes Lollus with his wife,
and not against his will:
And that he may but seldome speake,
Caecilian wisheth still, etc.

In his treatment of the conclusion, also, that is, in the kinds of point he employs, Jonson in general follows Martial. He too arranges that the point shall come to the reader as a surprise; he creates a difficulty or dilemma which is solved in the point. Much in Martial's manner are the following:

On Cashiered Captain Surly (Epigram 82)

Surly's old whore in her new silks doth swim:
He cast, yet keeps her well! No; she keeps him.

On Groyne (Epigram 117)

Groine, come of age, his state sold out of hand
For's whore: Groyne doth still occupy his land.

Jonson depends seldom upon mere surprise alone; almost always he combines it with some other kind of point, as Martial does, as, for example, with a pun in Epigram 75:

On Lippe, the Teacher

I cannot think there's that antipathy
'Twixt Puritans and Players, as some cry;
Though Lippe, at Paul's, ran from his text away
To inveigh 'gainst plays, what did he then but play?

Jonson follows Martial in making extensive use of irony. The epigram quoted above, No. 42, on the perfect agreement between husband and wife, is an instance. Jonson deals in innuendo and implication, often conveyed in the form of a rhetorical question. We saw that Jonson particularly reprehended in his English predecessors the directness of their abuse; and it is true that he was the first fully to develop the ironical method. Epigram 6, *To Alchemists,* shows how he satirizes by indirection:

If all you boast of your great art be true,
Sure, willing poverty lives most in you.

Often the body of the epigram is free from irony, but the conclusion gives an ironical and unexpected twist, as in Epigram 68 (quoted above) on the beaten playwright who showed two kinds of valor at once, or in Epigram 16, on a blustering coward, which concludes:

> He that dares damn himself, dares more than fight.[24]

Playing with words is perhaps even more a favorite device of Jonson's than of Martial's. Jonson plays both with meaning and with sound; Epigram 19 illustrates the former:

> That Cod can get no widow, yet a knight,
> I scent the cause: he wooes with an ill spright;

and the conclusion of Epigram 61 affords an instance of the latter:

> Thy praise or dispraise is to me alike,
> One doth not stroke me nor the other strike.

On the other hand, Jonson uses analogy and implied comparison less than Martial, possibly for the reason that he is more given to the use of metaphor. Some of his epigrams consist solely of an elaborate metaphor, such as Epigram 15, *On Court-Worm:*

> All men are worms: but this no man. In silk
> 'Twas brought to court first wrapt, and white as milk;
> Where afterwards it grew a butterfly,
> Which was a caterpillar: so 'twill die.

Of the same sort is Epigram 5, in which the union of Scotland and England is metaphorically compared to a marriage in which

> The world the temple was, the priest a king,
> The spoused pair two realms, the sea the ring.

Again, Jonson like Martial makes a large use of sententious and aphoristic utterances, especially for the concluding point. These are for the most part not drawn from proverbial lore; they are rather personal generalizations. I quote a few:

[24] Cf. Sir J. Davies, Epig. 28.

He that departs with his own honesty
For vulgar praise, doth it too dearly buy;

The body's stripes, I see, the soul may save;

. . . wherever death doth please t'appear,
Seas, serenes, swords, shot, sickness, all are there;

Who wets my grave can be no friend of mine;

He that wooes every widow will get none.[25]

On the whole, then, Jonson's epigrams closely resemble Martial's in their structure and in the varieties of each structural element. So likewise Jonson approximates his master in the use of formal rhetoric, although the Englishman's style is less pervaded by rhetorical devices than the Roman's. In his epigrams, balance, parallelism, and repetition are common; often they are combined, so that we find words or phrases repeated at the beginning or the end of consecutive clauses, as in Martial. No better example of Jonson's rhetoric can be found than his fourth epigram, *To King James:*

How, best of Kings, dost thou a sceptre bear!
How, best of Poets, dost thou laurel wear!
But two things rare the Fates had in their store,
And gave thee both, to show they could no more.
For such a Poet, while thy days were green,
Thou wert, as chief of them are said t' have been.
And such a Prince thou art, we daily see,
As chief of those still promise they will be.
Whom should my muse then fly to, but the best
Of Kings for grace; of Poets for my test?[26]

No instance could be found of more complete parallelism and balance; and the repetition at the beginning of the first two

[25] Epigs. 2, 21, 32, 33, 47.

[26] The structure of this epigram is interesting. Opening with two exclamations, each of which fills one line, it goes on with one couplet of transition, continues with two couplets of comment, and concludes with a final couplet of rhetorical question. Perhaps Jonson's most carefully wrought epigram, it shows also how he fits his structure and his rhetoric into his verse-form.

clauses is also noteworthy. A more striking instance of repetition is afforded by Epigram 12, in which twelve successive sentences, each of which exactly fills a couplet, end with the phrase "God pays." Similarly, in Epigram 73, eight lines begin with the word *"Item."* Jonson often concludes an epigram with a balanced antithesis, sometimes in chiastic order —one of Martial's favorite devices—as in the final verse of Epigram 36:

> But in my royal subject I pass thee,
> Thou flatter'dst thine, mine cannot flattered be,

where repetition of word and of sound is also used to heighten the effect. Jonson, indeed, often uses sound, either like-ending or alliteration, to point his balanced antithesis, as in the lines,

> Men love not thee for this; they laugh at thee;[27]
>
> Active in's brain, and passive in his bones.[28]

That Jonson in his meters should have been much affected by Martial is not to be supposed. All but a very few of Jonson's epigrams are written in the pentameter couplet; a few are in pentameter lines riming *ababcc, abbacc,* and the like; three epitaphs are in tetrameter, which is particularly adapted to the pathetic effect for which Jonson was striving. But taken as a whole his epigrams illustrate the dictum in his lost *Discourse of Poesie,* "wher he proves couplets to be the bravest sort of verses, especially when they are broken, like Hexameters; and that crosse rimes and stanzaes (becaus the purpose would lead him beyond 8 lines to conclude) were all forced."[29] No doubt Jonson regarded the pentameter couplet as a particularly good equivalent for the elegiac couplet of the Latin. One similarity to Martial in his handling of meter must be pointed out: the care he has evidently taken to fit the structure and the rhetoric of his epigrams into the metrical scheme, so that repeated phrases shall fall at the beginning or the end of successive lines,

[27] Epig. 129. [28] Epig. 68. [29] *Convers.* i, *Works,* III, 470.

so that parallel sentence-elements shall occupy similar places in the verse, and so that the exposition, transition, and conclusion of the epigram shall be marked off by being fitted into the metrical elements. Jonson has not been so consistent or so successful in this attempt as Martial was; here again he was a pioneer who made possible achievements to which he could not himself attain.

In style, Jonson approaches Martial, but does not give an exact English equivalent of the Latin. For Jonson's divergences, two reasons may be offered. In the first place, he was among the first in England to practice that balanced and antithetic style, imitated from the Latin poets, which found its greatest master in Pope; we could not expect a beginner to exhibit complete mastery. In the second place, the temper of Jonson's mind did not permit him to achieve the lightness of Martial. His expression is heavier, weightier, graver, than Martial's. Its outstanding characteristic is its concision, which is sometimes carried to the point of obscurity. The quotations in the preceding pages will afford sufficient examples of this quality. That this extreme brevity was regarded by Jonson as essential to the epigram and deliberately cultivated, we may infer from the fact that his other verses possess it to nothing like the same degree. It is one of his chief contributions to the English epigram. The next most important feature of his language is the colloquialism of his vocabulary, his avoidance of poetic diction. In this he is representative, like his immediate predecessors, of the anti-Elizabethan reaction. Furthermore, Jonson's work has that verisimilitude and individuality which are characteristic of Martial. He too makes the objects of his praise or satire seem real people, and he uses the same methods to this end: graphic detail, and large use of the first and second persons. He introduces himself constantly; he speaks of his book, his critics, his friends and enemies, as Martial does, and has none of that impersonality which marks the work of most of his English forerunners.

In poetic feeling and imagination, Jonson's epigrams are on the same level as Martial's with one or two exceptions. We know, to be sure, that Jonson was both more of a man and more of a poet than Martial; but we do not get this information from his epigrams. The fact that Jonson has kept his epigrams on so low an emotional level, when it is clear that he was capable of rising above it, is a great testimony to the hold which Martial had on him as the model for the epigrammatist: certainly Jonson would have derived no such notion from the Greek Anthology. As poetry, Jonson's epigrams are not preferable to Martial's; and as mere verse, they are inferior, for Jonson had not Martial's thorough command of his medium, a command so thorough as to eliminate all evidence of effort.

When one compares Jonson with Martial in character and personality, why, one asks oneself, should Jonson have selected Martial, from all the Latin poets, as a model for the "ripest of his studies"? One would expect him to be more in sympathy with Horace, or even with Juvenal. Martial, it seems, ought to have been peculiarly antipathetic to "honest Ben," independent, sturdy, stalwart, manly. Jonson had nothing of the parasite and the sycophant in him, Martial much. And though, as we know, Jonson was no puritan in conduct or in theory, he nevertheless possessed a strain of genuine religion and strove for a stoic attitude toward life.[30] His serious cast of mind and his strength of character are both to seek in Martial.

On the other hand, there are several bonds of union between the two men. Jonson was specially characterized by common sense, which he wished to introduce into literature; and Martial is assuredly matter of fact enough, in matter and in treatment. They both cling by preference to everyday affairs and to everyday thought and feeling. This, however, is also true of Horace, whose lyric flights rarely soar far from earth; yet Jonson did

[30] Jonson's stoicism is especially evident in the *Discoveries*. See in particular No. 1, *Fortuna* (ed. Castelain, p. 3; from Seneca) and No. 104, *De sibi molestis* (ed. Castelain, p. 73; from Seneca, *Epist. ad Lucil.* cxv): "A man should study other things, not to covet, not to feare, not to repent him: To make his Base such, as no Tempest shall shake him," etc.

not publish a collection of odes modeled on Horace's. But there is another cause of sympathy between Martial and Jonson which must have been powerful in forming Jonson's taste for Martial; namely, the similarity in their social position. Jonson had risen from the humblest rank and by sheer ability had won a place in the friendship and regard of many of the foremost men of his time. It is not to be supposed that he failed to encounter many of the difficulties and disagreeable situations which Martial also experienced in Rome; and while the two men reacted differently, Jonson would naturally enjoy the record of what he himself was so familiar with in his own life. It is not so difficult to understand Jonson's liking for Martial and enjoyment of him, as it is to understand why he should have chosen Martial as the special model of his own work.

But we must remember that Jonson's imitation has severe limits. It is the reverse of slavish. What Jonson desired, and that only, he took; and even that he completely transformed. His epigrams are as thoroughly English and as characteristic of himself, as Martial's are Roman and typical of their author. In the course of our detailed comparison this point came up again and again.[31] Moreover, Jonson's interest in Martial is chiefly literary, rather than personal. Jonson is not attempting to import Martial's spirit into English; but he is trying to imitate Martial's art. Above all, he was concerned with raising English poetry on its formal side to the classical standard. Given this interest in literary form, and given the predilection for social satire, which Jonson's comedies also exhibit, it is not strange that Jonson should have deemed it worth while to compose a collection of epigrams in which he might try to create an English equivalent to Martial's work.

[31] A passage in the *Discoveries* admirably defines Jonson's views and method of imitation: "I Know *Nothing* can conduce more to letters, than to examine the writings of the *Ancients,* and not to rest in their sole Authority, or to take all upon trust from them. . . . For to all the observations of the *Ancients,* wee have our owne experience, which, if wee will use, and apply, wee have better meanes to pronounce. It is true they open'd the gates, and made the way that went before us; but as Guides, not Commanders," etc. No. 21, ed. Castelain, p. 10; from Vives's preface to De *Discipl. Tradend.*

Jonson's boast that he had broken with the previous tradition of the English epigram and returned to "the old way and the true" tells precisely what he did. He has left the anecdotes, the proverbs, the mere character-sketches of his predecessors; he has turned from the satire of direct abuse to that of irony. The epigram with him is not a scourge with which to whip the follies of the time; he makes no pretense to the reformer's zeal. But above all he has developed a style and a form which are compatible with true literary merit. He does not affect to regard his epigrams as trifles tossed off in accordance with a passing fad. On the contrary, he devoted the full resources of his mature powers to their composition and he demands for them as serious consideration as is given to any other form of literature. All this he was enabled to do by what he learned from Martial.

Before Jonson, the English epigram appears at its best in Sir John Davies. But Sir John was a gifted amateur; his epigrams were composed as an amusement of his youth, and he was far from emulating the painstaking art of Martial. By the year 1616, when Jonson's folio appeared, the epigram was sinking low in the slough of popular literature. It had lost almost all trace of its classical origin; at its worst it was given over to obscenity and scurrility, and at its best, in social portraiture, it took little thought of form. Jonson learned the "old way and the true" of composing epigrams from Martial and started the epigram on its career as a reputable literary form. He may with truth be called the founder of the English epigram.

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